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Lord Northland's

CANDID SUGGESTIONS;

IN

EIGHT LETTERS

TO

SOAME JENYNS, ESQ;

On the respective Subjects of his

DISQUISITIONS,

LATELY PUBLISHED:

With some Remarks on the Answerer of his Seventh Disquisition,

Respecting the Principles of MR. LOCKE.

By B. N. TURNER, M. A.

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LETTERS, &c.

LETTER I.

To Soame Jenyns, Esq.

On his Diſquiſition reſpecting "The Chain of Univerſal Being."

Sir,

I Shall not, I hope, be thought to argue unfairly in the very outſet of my addreſs to you, if I produce the circumſtance of my having commented on your Diſquiſitions, as a ſufficient proof, that I look

upon them as having a conſiderable degree of merit; nor do I by any means meditate an attempt to rival you in fine writing, it being my utmoſt ambition, that I may be able to riſe as much above you in ſound argument, as I ſhall fall beneath you in brilliancy of wit, and elegance of expreſſion. It may be obſerved however, that if an anſwerer has ſome advantage in reſpect to argument, he labours under difficulties in point of ſtyle; he will frequently be under a neceſſity of ſtating, and abridging his author's meaning firſt, and giving his own afterwards in the ſame period, which will not be very favourable to preciſion, or poliſh.

That

That no general* anſwer has hitherto appeared to a work ſo full of queſtionable matter, and comprehending ſubjects, ſome of which are of extreme importance, is a circumſtance I did not expect: by this however I am the more encouraged to give the following obſervations to the public eye, and ſhall be happy if they meet with a reception at all anſwerable to the intention with which they were written; --- nor am I without hopes, ſince candour is the companion of genius, that even you yourſelf, Sir, will thank me for pointing out *ſome* errors, of the nature and tendency

 of

* There has been an Anſwer publiſhed to the ſeventh Diſquiſition, which ſhall be noticed in it's proper place.

of which, I am perſuaded, you was not aware.

As to your firſt Diſquiſition, "On the Chain of univerſal Being" this is not one of thoſe which drew forth the preſent critical animadverſions, but on the contrary, it is one in which there is little to be cenſured, and much to be admired. *O ſi ſic omnia!* --- How far any of the reſt deſerve a ſimilar compliment will be ſeen in the following critiques.

Your exordium is indeed worthy of that religion in which you profeſs yourſelf to be a believer. --- "The farther we enquire into the works of our great creator," you ſay "the more evident marks we ſhall diſcover of his infinite wiſdom and power" and

and here the reader will agree with me, that wherever, in the ſubſequent parts of your work, you have deviated from this leading principle, you will at leaſt have rendered your own concluſions extremely queſtionable. "This," you ſay, "is in nothing more conſpicuous, than in that wonderful chain of beings, with which this terreſtrial globe is furniſhed; riſing above each other, from the ſenſeleſs clod, to the brighteſt genius of human kind."

There is undoubtedly a chain of univerſal being, which, like the golden chain let down from the footſtool of Jove, encircles all nature in it's myſtical embrace. By this all beings whether animate or inanimate, are bound, or connected

nected together into one grand univerſal ſyſtem; and by this the globe itſelf, nay all other perceptible, or imperceptible worlds, are harmonized with each other, and ſupported like meteors in the unfathomable abyſs.

Thus then, Sir, as a poet, you would have done well to call this a "*Chain* of univerſal Being", tho', as a Philoſopher, you had better perhaps have called it a *Scale*, or *Gradation*; and you immediately feel the inconvenience of not attending to this diſtinction, where you ſay that the "*links* are ſo fine as to be quite imperceptible to our eyes," which word *links*, you are obliged to explain to mean the *boundaries* of thoſe qualities which form this *chain* of

of ſubordination --- This therefore makes rather a jumble of metaphors which might have been avoided. "The boundaries of theſe qualities," are "indeed, ſo blended together, and ſhaded off into each other, that where one ends, and the other begins we are unable to diſcover:" this you compare to a painter's colouring, tho', as a natural effect, it would, perhaps, have been better illuſtrated by the beautiful intermixture of the tints in the celeſtial bow.

That mankind partake, in ſome caſes, of the inſtinct of brutes, which is the claſs immediately below them, is evident, but your elucidation of this ſubject is not, I think, quite correct. You ſay that

that "it is by inſtinct, with the concurrence of reaſon, that we are taught the belief of a God, and of a future ſtate:" It is true indeed, that we ſometimes borrow the word *inſtinct* to mean an univerſal, or, if I may ſo ſay, a connate idea of the Deity, but this muſt ſurely be ſomething very different from that blind impulſe we obſerve in the brute creation.

Your next ſtroke is what would rather become the wit, or the ſatiriſt, than the philoſopher. War, you ſay, is the effect of brutal inſtinct in contradiction to reaſon, for by this man "haſtens to his own deſtruction, like the herring, and the mackarel, for the public benefit, which he neither underſtands,

ſtands, nor cares for." On the horrors of war we have no occaſion at preſent to expatiate; nor need we deny, that many enter into the military profeſſion, as they do into other employments, without thoroughly weighing them in the impartial ſcale of reaſon; but if war in general be thro' cruel neceſſity conducive, as you ſay, to the *public benefit*, why is the undertaking of it in no caſe conſonant to reaſon? and why muſt the hero be ſuppoſed to hazard, or lay down his life for what he neither underſtands, nor cares for?

To account for this martial propenſity in human nature, we need not confine ourſelves entirely to the love of country, nor even to ſelf-

defence, (which is ſurely no irrational principle,) ſince, by a ſlight inſpection of the volume of nature, without having read either Mr. Hobbes, or Lord Kaims, or *Alexander Roſs over*, we may reſt ſatisfied, that there are allurements enow in ambition, pride, or profit, to recruit the ranks when neceſſary in any nation not given up to ſloth and effeminacy. †

That we have alſo in this caſe an inſtinct, ſimilar to that of the brutes, in their conteſts for love, or food, or

† The meaneſt ſoldier has his motive, tho' not perhaps a very refined one. A veteran, in the reign of Charles II. being aſked whether he had fought for the King or the Parliament, replied, "God bleſs your honour, I fought for eight-pence a day."

or ſuperiority, (if this indeed can be called inſtinct) may very readily be granted, but that they who go to war are like the herring, and the mackarel, will ſcarcely be allowed, unleſs we ſhould attribute to theſe the rationality, and free will of Juvenal's rhombus, who was inſpired with a laudable ambition of being eaten by the emperor.

Your general plan however in this Diſquiſition is ingenious, and proper. You accurately, and elegantly obſerve that each claſs of beings partakes of the characteriſtic properties of *all* beneath it; as for inſtance, man has, beſides his own proper reaſon, the inſtinct of animals, the vegetation of plants, and the ſolidity of matter. In this ſenſe

indeed all nature is bound together as by a chain, and this you juſtly produce as an inſtance of the divine wiſdom, in not having jumbled together a maſs of heterogeous natures, ſince "by granting ſome *additional* quality to each ſuperior order in conjunction with *all* thoſe poſſeſſed by their inferiors," he has conſtituted throughout the whole a beautiful ſyſtem of ſubordination. And here you have almoſt, tho' not very diſtinctly, noticed another peculiarity, which I find it neceſſary to bring forwards; and that is, that each order of beings does not partake of the qualities of all the orders above itſelf, as it does of thoſe beneath, but only of the qualities of that order which

is

is contiguous, or immediately above it, thus a ſtone partakes only of the vegetation of plants, without either inſtinct, or reaſon.

Thus we have a facilis deſcenſus through all the lower claſſes of our kindred creatures, but to aſcend by the ſame means to ſuperior Beings, will be found a work much more arduous and uncertain. "Here" as you at firſt rightly obſerve, "we *muſt ſtop*, being unable to purſue the progreſs of this aſtoniſhing chain beyond the limits of this terreſtrial globe, with the naked eye," and yet, it ſeems, you are very unwilling to ſtop here, and ſtill fancy that "thro' the perſpective of analogy" you can diſcern this ſcale of Beings aſcending even into heaven, like

like Jacob's ladder, with an order of angelic natures on every round; for "by a like *eaſy tranſition*" you ſay "the loweſt of their orders may be united with the higheſt of our own, in whom, to reaſon may be added intuitive knowledge, inſight into futurity, *&c.* till we aſcend by almoſt infinite gradations to thoſe moſt exalted of created Beings who are ſeated on the footſtool of the celeſtial throne." Now, not to enter on an enquiry about the decency, or propriety of our indulging ſuch ſpeculations as theſe, what I chiefly wiſh to ſhew you, is, that your *tranſition* is not quite ſo *eaſy*, nor your analogy ſo juſt, as you ſeem to apprehend, for however flattering it may be to humanity to connect itſelf with

with angelical natures, and however we may boaſt of a divinæ particula auræ, yet there is one circumſtance in the above proceſs, which ſeems, in a great meaſure, to check our hopes. Each order of Beings, as we have ſeen, partakes of the characteriſtic qualities of that which is immediately above it, but then, it partakes of the qualities of *all* the orders beneath itſelf. If then we ſhould dare to ſuppoſe, (what cannot be aſcertained) that we have any thing in common with angelical natures, or, that the loweſt claſs of them has any intelligence ſo low as human reaſon, yet, to complete the analogy, we muſt carry this matter far beyond any poſſibility of belief; for we muſt

ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe ſuch ſuperior Beings to be endowed with the characteriſtic properties, not only of man, but of all the other claſſes inferior to him, ſuch as inſtinct, vegetation, and ſolidity.

Thus is the reaſoning pride of man for ever check'd in all its attempts to penetrate into that ſtate of things, to the perception of which its powers are by no means adapted; and this conſideration may afford an additional argument againſt the above analogy, for why ſhould angels be ſuppoſed to have a kind of reaſon, which conſidered in this light, would probably be of no uſe to them?

The conſequence indeed can be nothing but *confuſion*, whenever we attempt

attempt to erect a ſcientific Babel, for the purpoſe of prying into the unſearchable myſteries of heavenly things. Here, I ſay, we ought certainly to ſtop ſhort, and not indulge too far an arrogant and preſumptuous career of ſpeculation in things of which religion only, and not reaſon, is capable of informing us. Since then we fail in eſtabliſhing this analogy, it may ſerve to teach us, that we have from our own nature no ſolid claim to an affinity with ſuperior beings, nor any inherent and natural right in ourſelves to eternal life: whence we may have a clearer perception of the truth of that very ſignificant declaration, that *life and immortality are brought to light thro' the Goſpel.**

* II. Tim. 1, 10.

LETTER II.

TO THE SAME.

On his Diſquiſition reſpecting "Cruelty to inferior Animals."

SIR,

FROM theory you now take a ſtep into practice, and, after proving our affinity to inferior animals, you naturally paſs on to the conſideration of an offence, which that affinity certainly renders more heinous. To plead the cauſe of injured innocence, whether in fur, or in feathers, whether on two legs or four, argues a generous and noble mind: this then is a

ſubject

ſubject, as worthy of the pen of a Jenyns, as of the pencil of an Hogarth.

From a ſuppoſition, that *we* are equally obnoxious to the will of ſuperior beings, you properly recommend mercy to ſuch as are inferior; and, we may add that, whatever becomes of your natural analogy, yet, we *may* acquire a moral likeneſs to heavenly beings, by extending mercy; while, on the other hand, we *muſt* contract a ſimilitude to infernal ones, by exerciſing cruelty.

You regret the horrid deviations from the benevolent intentions of our maker, to which we are daily witneſſes. "Many derive their chief amuſement from the deaths

and ſufferings of inferior animals, and ſtill more look upon them only as inſtruments of wood, or iron," of both which you give the following facetious illuſtration --- " The carman drives his horſe, and the carpenter his nail, by repeated blows, and ſo long as they both go, they never reflect whether either of them have any ſenſe of feeling" and " the butcher plunges his knife into the throat of an innocent lamb, with as little reluctance, as the taylor ſticks his needle into the collar of a coat." By this then, I ſuppoſe, we are to underſtand that the carman regards his horſe as an inſtrument of wood or iron, and that the butcher's *chief amuſement* conſiſts in

in killing a lamb. Some pages afterwards indeed you grant the neceſſity there is for the profeſſion of the latter, with this proper, and excellent proviſo, that "ſo diſagreeable an office ſhould be performed with the utmoſt tenderneſs and compaſſion, and ſuch executions be made quick and eaſy as poſſible." The courſe of nature requires, and the divine beheſt permits us to kill what is neceſſary for our food; but you are much to be commended for cenſuring thoſe, if ſuch there be, who can ſubmit to a monſtrous kind of cookery, in having their meat ſlaughtered, by ſlow, and cruel methods, "for the gratification of their depraved and unnatural appetites."

In the inſtances above produced there is, I fear, too much reaſon for reproof. The lower ranks of people, in this country, are not famous for delicacy of feeling; and an habitual exerciſe of cruelty has ſo natural a tendency to harden the heart, that the latter deſcription of men here ſpoken of, are excluded, by our laws, from ſerving on juries. That the dray-horſe is often treated with much barbarity, is notorious, and, I fear, the calf undergoes a lingering death, for the ſake of ſome fancied improvement in the meat. To reſtrain ſuch abuſes, in a civilized and Chriſtian country, ought I ſhould think to be a principal object of the magiſtrate's attention.

Next

Next come on to be tried, two ſeparate cauſes, in which the dog, and horſe are plaintiffs; and, I hear them pleading, by their eloquent counſel, the one, " that, notwithſtanding his ſocial, and friendly qualities, he muſt be hanged without remorſe, if, by barking, to defend his maſter's perſon, and property, he happens unknowingly to diſturb his reſt " and the other, " that after a life of generous and painful ſervices, when worn down with age and infirmities, he is condemned to end his days by being miſerably whipped in a duſt-cart, or a hackney-coach" In the firſt caſe however it appearing, that the dog had been incorrigibly noiſy, and, by reitera-

tion

tion of his cries, had rendered them uſeleſs, like the boy and falſe alarms, his plea was not admitted. In the ſecond inſtance, defendant man was ſeverely cenſured for want of feeling, and gratitude, though the court was of opinion, that in conſideration of the horſe's age and infirmities, the unexpected ſtroke of a bullet, might perhaps have been rather a mercy than a cruelty.

In ſome of your ſubſequent trials, as, for inſtance, thoſe reſpecting cock-fighting, bull-baiting, &c. we ſhall not diſagree, ſince I am retained on the ſame ſide as yourſelf. But, to drop my metaphor, "the ſluggiſh bear," you ſay, "in contradiction to his nature, is taught

taught to dance, for the diverſion of a malignant mob, by placing red-hot irons under his feet" and, I believe you might have added, by putting out his eyes. Scarcely leſs, I apprehend, is the cruelty exerciſed on dogs, and horſes, in teaching them to tell fortunes, or play at cards; with many other inſtances of folly and barbarity, which, as you obſerve, "are committed without cenſure, and even without obſervation; but, we may be aſſured, that they cannot finally paſs away unnoticed, and unretaliated." †

† Your creed, or ſyſtem, throughout this Diſquiſition, like that of Dantè in his Inferno, ſeems to be, that there will be an-

You acknowledge, that, "the laws of ſelf defence, juſtify us in deſtroying thoſe animals who would deſtroy us, who injure our properties, or annoy our perſons." This, however, you obſerve, will not hold good, in caſe they are not, at the time, in a capacity to hurt us; but the inſtances you have produced of this are ſuch as made me, I own, both ſmile and wonder. "We have no right," it ſeems, "to ſhoot a bear on an *inacceſſible* iſland of ice, or an eagle on the mountain's top."

an exact and literal *retaliation* in a future ſtate, of the ſufferings inflicted here, though you do not ſpecify whether this is to be effected by the agency of ſuch animals as are now the ſufferers.

Now

Now, as to the firſt caſe, ſince you have conducted your bear to ſo ſtrange and inhoſpitable a coaſt, I cannot but think it would have been an inſtance of humanity in you, if you could ſomehow have contrived to conduct the gunner after him; and, as to the ſecond, why the eagle ſhould be no longer capable of annoying us, becauſe he is on the mountain's top, is, what I do not very readily comprehend.

Here, Sir, for the firſt time, you mention your favorite topic, "the origin of evil," with which, you frequently afterwards attempt to work wonders; and this, you only hint, at preſent, as an introduction to an idea, which may

have ſome truth in it, and that is, "that the nearer man approaches to a ſtate of nature, the more predominant is his diſpoſition to cruelty, and the more violently it operates." This propenſity, however, I fear, is not confined to thoſe only, who approach a ſtate of nature. Savages are indeed what their name imports, and the common people delight in cruel amuſements; but is there no ſavageneſs amongſt well bred people? Is there no ſuch thing as ſcandal and detraction, by which many, with the moſt perfect politeneſs, and complacency, can deſtroy the fortune, the peace of mind, or, even the life of a neighbour, or benefactor, and then thank God that they

they are not like the Miamis, who, ſacrifice their priſoners by deliberate tortures; nor, like Smithfield drivers, who harraſs their cattle till they are worked up to madneſs?

Not contented with ſavages, and the *canaille*, you next introduce children to be ſacrificed on the altar of ſyſtematic philoſophy --- a fiery trial, which, I hope, they will paſs through with much more ſafety, than they did through that of Moloch. "Children," you ſay, "approach a ſtate of nature, and, therefore, delight in cruelty." Now, in the firſt place, I cannot ſee why they approach a ſtate of nature at all, ſince the firſt things they imbibe are the manners of their parents. This

ſtate

ſtate indeed is in itſelf equivocal, and indeterminate: we have heard of a poetical, or Arcadian ſtate of nature, the Saturnian age of innocence, and ſimplicity, to which our tender years muſt ſurely bear a nearer reſemblance, than to a ſtate of brutal and ferocious manners. But, ſecondly, if children ſometimes ſeem to delight in giving miſery, this proceeds rather from ignorance, than a love of cruelty: if they confine an inſect in a box, or transfix it to ſee it ſpin, it is owing to their being unconſcious of the pain they give; and, to ſuch a practice, when properly explained, few of them, I hope, would ever return. Some children, no doubt, are born with vicious

diſ-

diſpoſitions; but, if cruelty begins with infancy, it will, moſt probably, increaſe with years, and the man will be more ſavage than the child. However, that the diſpoſitions of children in general, are, comparatively ſpeaking, tender, virtuous, and beneficent, is what we have the higheſt authority to declare.---*For of ſuch is the kingdom of Heaven.**

But, above all the reſt, the ſportſman feels the whole weight of your accumulated indignation, who "views with delight the trembling deer, and defenceleſs hare, flying for hours in the utmoſt agonies of horror and deſpair, and at laſt,

* Mat. xix, 14.

ſinking

ſinking under fatigue, devoured by their mercileſs purſuers; --- or ſees with joy the beautiful pheaſant, and harmleſs partridge drop from their flight, weltering in their blood, or perhaps periſhing with wounds and hunger, under the cover of ſome friendly thicket, to which they have in vain reteated for ſafety." Here, Sir, you are ſtrangely miſtaken; nothing provokes a ſportſman more than not to be able to recover his wounded game; nor does his pleaſure, I believe, ariſe, in any degree, from the pain experienced by the trembling fugitives, but from his own ſkill, the ſagacity, or fleetneſs of his dogs, &c. and, amidſt the ſympathy we feel on this

this occaſion, we may reflect, that the animals ſo deſtroyed were not intended to ſink under diſeaſe, or old age, or be diſſolved by an unprofitable corruption. There is one practice indeed, for which reaſon check'd by horror, dares ſcarcely aim at an apology, and that is fiſhing with a hook. I do not mean to ſay that the angler *delights* in giving tortures, but I wiſh he would be more careful either to prevent, or to ſhorten them.

What ſeems to diſtreſs you moſt is the cruelty of the ſportſman, in "ſparing neither labour nor expence to preſerve, and propagate theſe innocent animals *for no other end*, but to multiply the objects of his perſecution." As

well, I ſhould think, might the grazier be condemned for encreaſing his breed of cattle, merely to multiply objects for the cruelty of the butcher; and indeed ſince all men are born to miſery, what ſhall we ſay of the ſtateſman, who is ſo mercileſs and unfeeling as to encourage population? †

For the ſportſman you can find no better compariſon than that of "a ſuperior (infernal) Being, whoſe whole endeavours were employed, and whoſe whole pleaſure conſiſted in terrifying, enſnaring, tormenting, and

† A female hiſtorian being congratulated on the happy progreſs of her pregnancy, replied, "Alas! what pleaſure can it be to bring forth a child into a *land of ſlavery?*"

and deſtroying mankind," and "we muſt acknowledge," you ſay, "that with regard to inferior animals, juſt ſuch a Being is a ſportſman."

Upon the whole, I am happy to declare, that this Diſquiſition is ingenious, and the object of it extremely laudable, and I heartily wiſh that the moraliſt, the ſatiriſt, and the preacher would unite their efforts to diſcourage a practice, which, tho' not in the particular inſtance of the ſportſman, yet does in many caſes debaſe mankind to a level even with fiends:---they ſhould however be careful not to blunt the edge of their reproofs by producing wrong or trivial examples It is with pleaſure that I embrace this opportunity of paying a juſt

compliment to an excellent novel by obſerving, that there is in the *Spiritual Quixote* a well-fancied, and well-ſupported character of a ſingular kind of knight-errant, who iſſues forth for the protection, and reſcue of oppreſſed and injured animals. Tho' this laudable zeal may not perhaps be imitable in it's utmoſt extent, yet ſurely it becomes every gentleman, not only to ſet a proper example, but to exhort, reprove, or interfere on all proper occaſions, in order to prevent, as much as poſſible, a crime ſo reproachful to humanity, and offenſive to the common Father and Creator of all things.

LET-

LETTER III.

TO THE SAME.

On his Diſquiſition reſpecting "a Præexiſtent State."

SIR,

IN purſuance of my plan I am now led to a conſideration of your arguments in favour of a præexiſtent ſtate, it is not however my intention, either altogether to affirm, or deny the reality of the ſtate itſelf. This is, and ſtill muſt remain a matter of the greateſt uncertainty; nor can I ſubſcribe to the cenſure you have thrown out againſt our divines and metaphyſicians, for neg-

neglecting a ſubject, about which every thing that can be urged muſt be ſo very undeciſive.

You ſet off with a moſt formidable liſt of authorities, "The Gymnoſophiſts of Egypt, the Magi of Perſia, the Brachmans of India, the greateſt philoſophers of Greece and Rome, and the fathers and primitive writers of the Chriſtian church, have all adopted this doctrine." The wonder then ſeems to be that they have left no better arguments in it's ſupport.

Your firſt ſpecies of proof is from reaſon; for though a male and female may produce a body, yet you think it impoſſible that they could produce an immortal ſoul to inhabit it. Now I muſt

own

own, I cannot ſee why that Almighty Being who endued them with powers for one effect, might not, if he pleaſed, have endued them with powers for both. Suppoſing however, that the ſoul is not traducible, what then? Then "you ſay" when a body is produced there *muſt* be a præexiſtent ſoul ready to take poſſeſſion of it" but if the ſoul be a diſtinct creation, I ſee no reaſon why it may not be created at that time as well as any other. Your idea however, ſeems to be, that it was created at no time at all, "for whatever has no end," you ſay "can never have had any beginning" whence it muſt follow that the ſoul muſt have been coeval with the Deity, ſo that the Deity would be

no

no longer the *firſt cauſe*, nor could he have created an immortal Being, ſince he would not have had the priority of exiſtence neceſſary for that purpoſe.

Your miſtake both here, and in the following Diſquiſition, proceeds from your not conſidering the different ſenſes in which the word *eternity* may be underſtood. The eternity of the ſoul both had, and, as we have ſeen, muſt have had a beginning, though it has acquired this name from it's having no end: whereas the eternity, in which the Deity exiſts is compleat a parte ante, as well as a parte poſt, for we can aſcribe no beginning to him who is ſelf-exiſtent, and the great Firſt Cauſe of all things.

Your

Your ſecond argument from reaſon is, That our preſent being is "a confuſed jumble of good and evil, happineſs and miſery, virtue and vice, reward and puniſhment, which is unintelligible, as well as inconſiſtent with the goodneſs of God, unleſs we take in the idea of a præexiſtent, as well as of a future ſtate." --- The *happineſs* there is in the world is not inconſiſtent with the goodneſs of God, and as to the *miſery*, this may be ſufficiently accounted for, from it's being a ſtate of trial and probation, without any reference to former diſobedience.

Your next argument is from the face of nature, or rather the ſtate of man, and is very ſimilar to the

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foregoing. Here, Sir, you exert all the powers of genius and oratory, in a diſplay of human miſery and wretchedneſs, tho' not without ſome degree of humour, which may releaſe us from any apprehenſions of your having had more than your ſhare of what you ſo feelingly deſcribe. The ſcene of horror you have here drawn, and which could ſcarcely be exceeded by the pencil of a Salvator Roſa, is ſuppoſed, by you, to be the effect of præexiſtent crimes. You do not indeed inſiſt on this as the *ſole* cauſe, for that would have run counter too violently both to reaſon and revelation, you therefore ſlightly, and en paſſant, introduce *probation* as a kind of collateral

reaſon

reaſon. And yet the world is repreſented by you in the ſame page, both as a horrible dungeon, and a ſpacious, beautiful, and durable ſtructure.

The above hypotheſis, you think, is neceſſary for the juſtification of Providence, in permitting

> Labour, and penury, the racks of pain,
> Diſeaſe, and ſorrow's weeping train;

together with all the horrors of war, and thoſe bitter ingredients in the cup of ſocial and domeſtic life, ſuch as "treachery, injuſtice, ingratitude, ill-humour, perverſeneſs &c." Non tali auxilio --- if our patience, as well as obedience, is to be tried, there muſt be ſufferings--- but are there no antidotes? are there no ſuch things as friendſhip, love,

honor, gratitude, affluence, learning, genius? --- or if, in ſpite of theſe, the worthy mind be bowed down with affliction, will not Providence ſupply contentment, fortitude, the applauſe of a good conſcience, and hopes of that reward which is particularly promiſed to thoſe that weep?

All evils may be divided into ſuch as we bring upon ourſelves, and ſuch as we do not. Now neither of theſe, I apprehend, can be attributed to præexiſtent cauſes. The firſt claſs are ſuch as apparently ariſe from our own miſconduct, and as to the ſecond ſort, or incidental evils, ſuch as the falling of the tower of Siloam, we are forbidden to aſcribe them to antecedent crimes

in

in general, without any exception as to the caſe of a præexiſtent ſtate. --- Beſides we read much of the *external* proſperity of the wicked, and ſufferings of the righteous in this preſent life, whence, on your ſuppoſition, it would ſeem to follow, that they who are the beſt men here muſt heretofore have been the worſt, and vice verſâ; and thus, for our amuſement, we might trace them alternately back through an hundred other præexiſtent ſtates, for I ſee no neceſſity for our confining ourſelves to one.

Once more, --- We may obſerve that the general ends of puniſhment are, either to work a reformation, or render ſatisfaction to offended juſtice; you ſeem to have adopted both

both of them in the preſent caſe. But, if our reformation be intended by this puniſhment for præexiſtent crimes, why were they previouſly obliterated from our memory, which muſt rob the correction of it's due effect? or, if the ſatisfaction of juſtice was the object, why was not that juſtice made apparent, or why was not the puniſhment ſtill further heightened by permitting a conſciouſneſs of former guilt?

Having diſpatched *reaſon* and the *face of nature*, you now come to *revelation*, by which you ſay the preſent doctrine "is no leſs confirmed" Reaſon, as we have ſeen, may be a corrupt judge, and the appearance of things an unfaithful witneſs; but to revelation we muſt neceſ-

neceſſarily bow, as to a perfect law, which, when rightly underſtood muſt be infallibly deciſive. Here I muſt own I expected ſome better authority on your part, ſince there are paſſages in ſcripture which might be, and actually have been produced on the ſame ſide, though I do not find you have quoted any text on the occaſion except one, which is nothing to the purpoſe, being plainly an exhortation to godly diligence, *work out your Salvation with fear and trembling*, nor do I ſee why this *ſalvation* muſt neceſſarily refer to a præexiſtent ſtate, as if there were not crimes enow in the preſent.

Your whole argument then from revelation is founded on the doctrine

trine of original ſin, for "we are conſtantly repreſented" you ſay, "in ſcripture, as coming into the world under a load of guilt, as condemned criminals, the children of wrath, and objects of divine indignation, which can be no otherwiſe accounted for than by ſuppoſing a præexiſtent ſtate, in which men had incurred the divine diſpleaſure." This you triumphantly diſplay as the grand deſideratum, the happy clue by which you have at length been fortunately enabled to penetrate into the labyrinths of infinite wiſdom, and to diſcover that it's diſpenſations are a kind of abſtract of the penal laws, conſiſting of either commitments, baniſhments, or executions for præexiſtent offences!

offences! This ſurely is *rational Chriſtianity* with a vengeance, and what I did not expect to meet with from Mr. Jenyns.

Still leſs does it become a defender of Chriſtianity in it's myſterious ſenſe, to ſay that "men are placed here in order to give them an opportunity of *expiating* this guilt by ſufferings," "of *atoning* for their depravity by the uſual ſufferings of this life, and *working it off* by acts of poſitive obedience." This, I ſay, is not very conſiſtent with the idea of their being at beſt unprofitable ſervants; nor with the neceſſity of that redemption, which you have ſometimes yourſelf very properly inſiſted on as the fundamental doctrine of Chriſtianity.

With what satisfaction then does the mind return from such reveries to the consistent, though mysterious truths of the Gospel! in favour of which we might, I think, extract an additional argument from your present reasoning; for, if our sufferings were the effect of any anteval wickedness of our own, why might not we ourselves have been sufficient, and consequently permitted to atone for them? --- so that the redemption itself seems to indicate, that great part at least of our depravity has flowed from *man's first disobedience, and the fruit of that forbidden tree, &c.* which, as it was not contracted, so it is reasonable to suppose it was not properly expiable by ourselves.

The

The very exiſtence of evil, you think, neceſſarily implies, and preſuppoſes a former ſtate in which men had offended, for "if a man at the moment of his entrance into a new country was declared a criminal, it would ſurely be unneceſſary to aſſert that he had lived in ſome other before he came there." Here your ſimile plainly begs the queſtion. With reſpect to a man arriving in a new country, he is an adult, and therefore muſt have lived ſomewhere before; but with reſpect to a new born infant, this is the very thing to be proved. However, though the myſteries of the divine œconomy cannot always be illuſtrated by human occurrences, yet there is ſomething in the

above ſimilitude which ſeems capable of being explained with ſome advantage. --- A man arriving in a new country finds himſelf treated as a criminal, without the ſmalleſt conſciouſneſs of having incurred any guilt which could have occaſioned ſuch uſage; how then ſhall we account for this, unleſs we ſuppoſe that the prince of the country is inclined to make trial of his patience, in order, if he approves of his behaviour, to promote him in future to the higheſt honours?

This doctrine however of a præexiſtent ſtate is, you ſay, the very *eſſence* of the Chriſtian diſpenſation, and the grand principle in which it differs from the religion of nature. Here, Sir, you take for granted your having

having proved that this doctrine is to be found in Chriſtianity, which is not quite ſo clear; but that you ſhould deny it to be any part of the religion of nature is rather ſurprizing, when we recollect that you ſet off with repreſenting it as held by the Gymnoſophiſts, the Magi, the Brachmans, and the Greek and Roman Philoſophers, as well as plainly deducible from reaſon and the nature of things: — now I muſt own I know not who were the interpreters of natural religion, except the ſages above-mentioned, nor in what volume they could read it, unleſs in the heart of man, and the face of nature.

Laſt of all, permit me to obſerve that what I muſt think the moſt weighty

weighty and productive argument is ſtill behind. Men in general are repreſented by you as compleatly miſerable --- are you then aware --- I hope you are not --- that by your ſcheme, which almoſt entirely ſets aſide the neceſſity of a future ſtate, you in the ſame degree deprive the ſufferer of this world of his beſt, his only ſolid comfort, the hopes of immortality? "Was that man a lover of his race" ſays an ingenious traveller* ſpeaking of Voltaire, "who deprived the afflicted of their moſt healing balm, and the aged of their greateſt conſolation? let the aged and afflicted anſwer the queſtion ---Wherein lies the chief alleviation of their ſufferings?

* Mr. Sherlock.

ings ? is it not in religion ? " But a religion which refers back human ſufferings, almoſt totally to præexiſtent offences, will in this reſpect, I fear, be little better than no religion at all.

Thus, Sir, have I taken a view of your arguments on this very curious ſubject, from all which I muſt beg leave to obſerve in concluſion, that, to me at leaſt, you have made a præexiſtent ſtate leſs credible than it was before---that, if it ſhould be admitted at all, we are under no neceſſity of adopting your ſcheme for it's illuſtration, --- and laſtly, that, if it ever did exiſt, it was moſt undoubtedly not eternal.

LET-

LETTER IV.

TO THE SAME.

On his Diſquiſition reſpecting "The Nature of Time."

SIR,

HAVING thus with great ingenuity

Deſcrib'd our præexiſtent ſtation
Before this vile terrene creation, †

you now very naturally and regularly *come down to Adam*, or enter upon a diſcuſſion of our *temporal* being; and, that you may not jog on in a vulgar track, you ſeem as

† Prior's Alma, Canto II.

deſirous

desirous of demolishing Time, as you was before of establishing præexistence. You are indeed one of the most extraordinary killers of time I ever met with, for you have employed it, like a suicide, to destroy itself; but since the sober and ordinary part of mankind are still apt to think, that time is not only real, but of the highest value, I shall endeavour, for their sakes, to save it from annihilation.

The three great points you here labour to establish seem to be---That *time* is nothing,---That *eternity* has no duration, and therefore is as good as nothing,---and yet, notwithstanding this new-discovered analogy, That *time* and *eternity* bear no manner of affinity, or relation

to each other! --- It may, at firſt ſight, appear an eaſy taſk to refute ſelf-refuted propoſitions, but, in fact, this is by no means the caſe, ſince they are generally ſo deeply intrenched in logic, or metaphyſics, as to bid defiance to reaſon and argument, and indeed, as Biſhop Warburton expreſſes it on another occaſion, " are the leſs liable to be approached for having no weak ſides of common ſenſe. " † --- This long eſſay therefore, in which I am ſcarcely able to hunt up one ſingle truth, might perhaps very ſafely have been leſt to the internal evidence of it's own futility, or conſign'd over to the laſh of your own juſt cenſure, in another place, *

† Triennial Charge, 1761. * Page 103.

where

where you ſay, "Some philoſophers have ventured, in oppoſition to all men's ſenſes, and even to their own, to deny the exiſtence of matter, for no other reaſon but becauſe they find in it properties which they are unable to account for."

How potent is the magic touch of philoſophy! What worlds have vaniſhed before it, like an enchanted foreſt, and left not a wreck behind! Our bodies, it ſeems, have been long ſince ſyllogized into nothing, and indeed we can ſcarcely *call our ſouls our own.* Space, I believe, is ſtill extant, tho' under perpetual apprehenſions of undergoing the ſame fate, and, like the brazen head of old, you have now pronounced the non-entity of time. --- *Quantum*

eſt in rebus inane! --- In the midſt of this material, ſpiritual, and temporal annihilation may we not fear leſt, ere long, the very *ſhadow* of things may be run away with, as the Devil is ſaid to have run away with the Frenchman's, whoſe body was in conſequence ever after tranſparent. † And here, by the way, I beg leave juſt to obſerve, that the

† There is ſomewhere an old ſtory of a ſet of ſtudents in necromancy, who bargained with the devil, that in return for inſtructing them, he ſhould have a right to ſeize on that ſtudent who came laſt out of the cave where they aſſembled. One moon-light night a Frenchman, happening to be laſt, recommended the Devil to the ſtudent behind him, pointing to his own ſhadow, which Satan accordingly ran away with and left him tranſparent.---Hence, poſſibly, the old ſaying, "Devil take the hindmoſt."

ſeems

great Berkley ſeems to have manag-ed matters rather clumſily, ſince, after depriving the world of it's *ſub-ſtance*, he has left it's *ſhadow* unac-countably eclipſing the moon, with-out any denſity to occaſion it.

Let us now examine into the *ſubſtance* of your reaſoning on the preſent ſubject.--- "We are ſo apt," you ſay, "to *miſtake* a ſuc-ceſſion of thoughts and actions for time that it is impoſſible to ſeparate, or diſtinguiſh them, and time ab-ſtracted from ſuch actions is no-thing." Well then, --- call *time* a *ſucceſſion of thoughts and actions* and then there is no *miſtake* --- they are one and the ſame thing, ſo that there can be no ſeparation, nor ab-ſtraction in the caſe. "Time is only

only the mode in which ſome created Beings exiſt, but in itſelf has really no exiſtence at all." *A corporeal* exiſtence indeed it has not, any more than ſpirit has, but that is no reaſon why it may not have a kind of exiſtence peculiar to itſelf. Strictly ſpeaking, it is not *a mode*, but a *ſimple idea* gained by reflection, and having it's own modes. †

But ſuppoſing *time* and *ſpace* to be the eſſential modes of the exiſtence of body, then ſurely they muſt be *ſomething*, otherwiſe there would be nothing for body to exiſt in; and I muſt think it full as irrational to ſay that the world exiſts *in nothing*, as to ſay that it was made *by nothing*: and here I cannot but applaud your modeſty in not taking away *ſpace*

† Locke, Book II. C. 14.

as well as *time*: the ſame proceſs, and the ſame trouble would have done for both, and then you might have adopted, and parodied the lover's wiſh,

Ye Gods, annihilate both ſpace and time
To make one Sceptic famous!

Your appeal to the authority of the Atomic Philoſophers and their Poet Lucretius, can be of little avail. This ſubject is allowedly abſtruſe and difficult, * but were it not ſo, yet when was there a deluſion or a nonſenſe which had not ſome ſect or other to defend, and patronize it?

The diviſion of time, you ſay, into days, years, &c. is what gives it the *appearance* of ſomething real. But ſurely it's being capable of being

* Locke, Book II. Chap. 14

ing ſo divided is no bad proof that it *is* ſomething real. Nor can I ſee the impropriety, which you ſuppoſe, in imagining time "to reſemble a great book, one of whoſe pages is every day wrote [written] on, and the reſt remain blank, to be filled up in their turns with the events of futurity."

Your next ſtroke is at Eternity, which you ſay is a different mode of exiſtence from time, to prove which you aſſert that the Supreme Being ſees all things, paſt, preſent, and to come, not as we do *ſucceſſively*, but at one view, and in one aggregated maſs; and that ſince his ideas can have no ſucceſſion, they can have no time, ſo that his exiſtence, "if the expreſſion may be allowed,

allowed you, is what you would call *perpetually inſtantaneous.*" You are certainly welcome, Sir, to your own expreſſions, but you will allow me to ſay with reſpect to this, That it it does not give me a more determinate idea than *light darkneſs*, or *cold heat.*

I am happy to find, that you yourſelf acknowledge the incomprehenſible nature of eternity, for "of this" you ſay "human reaſon can afford us no manner of conception." If then we cannot judge of eternity, how much leſs can we judge of the great Author of this and all other exiſtence, ſo as to reaſon about or determine the mode of his ideas! As to other Beings exiſting in eternity, we know that

there are *things which the angels desire to look into*,* so that eternity may be very compatible with a limited and progressive knowledge, and consequently analogous to time.

But tho' we cannot argue rightly on the Divine Essence, we may be able to see what is amiss in *your* argument about it. "Eternity," you say, "is that mode of existence in which all events past, present, and to come, are seen at one view:" Now this may be a definition of *infinite knowledge*, but surely it is not so of *infinite duration*; and to deduce from hence that God has no succession of existence, is to employ *omniscience*, which is one of his attributes, to destroy *eternity*, which is another. The truth is

* 1 Peter, 1, xii. that

that his eſſence is far above and beyond all modes, or manners of exiſtence whatſoever, how then ſhall we preſume ſo far to dogmatize on ſuch a ſubject, as to ſay that his omniſcience is incompatible with his eternal duration---that he, who allowedly has *all* knowledge, and exiſts in *all* ſpace, ſhould notwithſtanding have nothing ſimilar to time to exiſt in, or, to explain abſurdity by nonſenſe, ſhould exiſt in an *eternity* which is *perpetually inſtantaneous!*

Your next argument is one of which you ſeem very fond, "Eternity cannot be compoſed of finite parts, which, however multiplied, can never become infinite." This however is but a ſophiſm --- Whilſt

finite parts indeed are multiplied in a finite or conceivable degree, they are not infinite, but tho' the mind, by it's own powers, is unable to conceive them infinitely multiplied, yet this is no proof but that they may be ſo, and thereby conſtitute eternity. Here, by the way, let me aſk, What are finite parts of time? months, days, hours, *&c.* are arbitrary diviſions, the creatures of fancy, and have in themſelves no diſtinct eſſence, ſo that tho' time is real, and eternity an extenſion of it, yet to ſay that eternity is compoſed of finite parts of time ſeems not to be correct. On this ſubject however, Sir, we neither have, nor ought to have, diſtinct ideas, and much of your miſtake, eſpecially

in

in the preſent Diſquiſition, would have been avoided, had you attended to that excellent argument of Mr. Locke, That finite reaſon is not capable of comprehending infinity, "For whilſt men, ſays he, talk and diſpute of infinite ſpace or duration as if they had as compleat and poſitive ideas of them as they have of a yard, or an hour, or any determinate quantity, it is no wonder if the incomprehenſible nature of the thing they diſcourſe of, or reaſon about, leads them into perplexities and contradictions, and their minds be overlaid by an object too large and mighty to be ſurveyed and managed by them." *

There

* Locke, B. II. Chap. 17.

There are however two paſſages in ſcripture which you think evidently imply duration without ſucceſſion; *I am*, * and *Before Abraham was I am* :† Theſe are, Sir, inconceivably ſublime ideas, ſuited to the ſubject, and not to be adequately expreſſed in any language, except that which ſeems providentially adapted to this ſacred purpoſe. The latter may be an alluſion to the former, and you do not ſeem to be aware that the tenſe here uſed in the Hebrew is capable of expreſſing this myſterious exiſtence, which is at once both infinitely preſent, and infinitely extended. Thus, Sir, have you attempted to deprive the great JEHOVAH of that duration which his

* Exod. iv. 14. † John viii. 58.

very

very name ſo emphatically imports, and to reduce to a ſort of mathematical point of time, the exiſtence of Him who is *Alpha and Omega, the firſt and the laſt, which is, and which was, and which is to come.* †

You next, Sir, treat us with an odd account of "*ideas* which are *imperceptible* when they *vary much* from that *deſtined* pace with which they *all* follow one another in a *regular* and *uniform* ſucceſſion." This to be ſure is not quite ſo perſpicuous as the ſhadowleſs Frenchman, celebrated above; but your meaning I conceive to be this --- Ideas will appear confuſed, or in one continued ſtream, if they ſucceed each other with ſuch a rapidity,

† Rev. Chap. 1. that

that the mind has not ſufficient time to contemplate and diſtinguiſh them; but from hence we might ſurely draw an argument for the exiſtence of time, becauſe it proves it's being neceſſary to perception.

To all this reaſoning you ſubjoin what I muſt be pardoned in thinking is no bad example of "ſimiles unlike." "We now, you ſay, ſee every object *as it paſſes*, through a ſmall aperture *ſeparately*, as in a Camera Obſcura, and this we call time, but at the concluſion of this ſtate the window may be thrown open, and the whole proſpect appear at one view." Now why objects ſeen through a Camera Obſcura have a more *progreſſive*, or a more *ſeparate* appearance, I cannot tell; and

and though when the window is thrown open, the proſpect may, to be ſure, be ſomewhat wider, yet what idea can this trifling difference be ſuppoſed to give us of *infinite*, in contradiſtinction to *finite* perception! Here permit me juſt to hint, that had I been inclined to make a compariſon out of this beautiful experiment, I would have ſaid, that the glory and brilliancy of objects there repreſented, might ſerve perhaps the beſt of any thing in nature to afford us a glimpſe of a future ſtate.

You aſſert that "time has no more a real eſſence, independent of thought, and action, than ſight, hearing, and ſmell have independent of their proper organs" to ſpeak

accurately, you ſhould have ſaid, that the idea of time is gained by reflection, as that of matter is by ſenſation. It does not follow however that either time or matter are nonentities becauſe they may happen not to be perceived, for then the ſun in a perfectly dark night, and an undiſcovered mineral in the bowels of the earth, would be nonentities.

Your next argument militates directly againſt your own ſuppoſition. "There are paſſages in ſcripture," you ſay, "declaring the annihilation of time, at the conſummation of all things," --- What ſtronger proof then can we have that time at preſent is *ſomething?* otherwiſe theſe paſſages would declare

the

the *annihilation of nothing*. The only text you produce is that amazingly ſublime one in the Revelations: *And the angel which I ſaw ſtand upon ſea and the earth, lifted up his hand towards heaven, and ſwore by him that liveth for ever and ever, &c. that there ſhould be time no longer.* † The period here put to time plainly implies it's previous exiſtence, and this ſublime imagery is intended to expreſs, that *human life*, and indeed all things *temporal*, whoſe duration is meaſured by ſtated periods, will then be no more, that the prophecies have received their completion, and that time muſt thenceforth be ſwallowed up in eternity! To uſe the word *time* to mean our preſent being is common

† Rev. x. 5, 6. and

and familiar ; thus the unfortunate Lord Ruſſel, juſt before his execution, wound up his watch with this ſtriking and beautiful reflection, "I have now done with time, and muſt think only of eternity."

Leaving Philoſophy and theology, you now, Sir, laſt of all, condeſcend to quibble us into conviction. You compare the attributes and powers of time with thoſe of nothing, when *realized* (you mean *perſonified.*) "Nothing, you ſay, when ſuppoſed to be *ſomething* (no, Sir, it is ſuppoſed to be *nothing*) is thus deſcribed by Lord Rocheſter,

Nothing, thou elder brother e'en to ſhade!
Thou hadſt a Being, ere the world was made,
And well fix'd are alone of ending not afraid.

Theſe conceits, however, as it happens, are *not* applicable to time,

and

and if they are ſo to eternity, it is not becauſe eternity is nothing, but becauſe it may be looked upon as the firſt of created things. --- You have more of this ſort of conundrum-argument, which I beg leave to refer to it's proper patroneſs, the Lady Diaria.

" From this non-exiſtence of time *thus eſtabliſhed*, " you ſay, " many concluſions will ariſe both uſeful and entertaining. " Now tho' to refute *concluſions* drawn from falſe premiſes might ſeem a *waſteful and ridiculous exceſs*, yet, for the elucidation of your reaſoning, I ſhall juſt curſorily ſay a few words on each.

Firſt If the world was to revolve round the ſun in one day, and all our thoughts and actions which

which now take up a year could be comprized in that one day, then that day would not only *ſeem*, but actually *be* a year—— This is mere trifling, for it ſuppoſes all our faculties, as well as the courſe of nature, to be different from what they are.

Secondly. Hence it follows, that the more ideas we have in a given time, the longer this time will not only *ſeem* but actually *be* —— It will not even *ſeem* longer, for it is to the lazy and the indolent that time appears the longeſt, in proportion to the leiſure they have for contemplating and reflecting on it's ſucceſſion.

Thirdly. We cannot form a judgment of the lives, enjoyments, or

ſuf-

ſufferings * of animals, becauſe we are totally unacquainted with the progreſſion of their ideas, ſo that the inſect † that ſurvives but a day may live as long as that which breaths a century. —— As the lapſe of time is regular and uniform, we *can* judge of the reſpective lives of animals as well as of any thing elſe in nature.

* Your Diſquiſition on Cruelty then muſt appear ſuperfluous.

† A moral Poet might ſay

Thine's a ſummer, mine's no more,
Tho' repeated to threeſcore:

But this language does not ſo well ſuit the metaphyſician.—And here, Sir, you ſhould have referred to your original, which was doubtleſs that excellent Eſſay by Bp. Pearce in the Freethinker, No. 114, lately reprinted in the Gent. Mag. for 1777.

Fourth-

Fourthly. We cannot judge of real evils becauſe we know not their duration, and things are here exhibited to us by ſcraps and detached portions, and look like miſhapen blotches, &c. —— I thought juſt now that we could not judge of the ſufferings of animals, for want of knowing the progreſſion of their ideas, but ſurely we know the progreſſion of our own, ſo that we have little chance, alas! of being unacquainted with *real evils.* As to the appearance of nature's being like miſhapen blotches, the reader may be referred to my firſt quotation from you (p. 4.) and to the whole of your next Diſquiſition.

Fifthly. Time being nothing can put an end to nothing; and as

thought

thought bears no relation to time, ſo the ſoul can bear no relation to it either, and therefore muſt be eternal. —— Time, or rather cauſes which cannot exiſt but in time, do however put an end to all periſhable things, and therefore time is ſomething. --- If time be ſomething, then ſurely it bears a very cloſe relation to our thoughts, and I hope I have ſufficiently proved that the ſoul *may* bear a relation to time, and to eternity likewiſe.

Sixthly. On this article I muſt be more explicit, ſince your reaſoning is curious, and eſſential to the point in hand. You repreſent divines, and metaphyſicians as having a receipt to make eternity, and this is " Take of time quant. ſuff. chop it into ſmall pieces, then add theſe

millions upon millions, and extend it both ways till it is fit for uſe. — Then divide it in the middle, and pull each end like a jugler's rib-band as far as you pleaſe, which will make the half of eternity equal to a whole, &c. Here after ſetting your divines to *make* what they acknowledge, like yourſelf, they cannot *comprehend*, you fly to the old quibble that half an eternity will be equal to a whole. That an eternity, a priori, or a poſteriori, ſhould be called *eternity* may argue indeed a poverty in language, but this can be no proof that there is no ſuch thing. Will you allow that it is poſſible for God to create an immortal being? ſince this does not imply a contradiction, I ſuppoſe you will. Such a being then muſt begin to exiſt

exiſt in time, but will not ceaſe to exiſt to all eternity: this ſurely is intelligible enough, though there may be no ſingle word to expreſs ſuch exiſtence; ſo that it is not true that "whatever had a beginning muſt have an end, and what has no end could have no beginning, &c" * But further, --- As a repetition of what you before ſaid, you again inſiſt that "time is finite and ſucceſſive, and eternity infinite and *inſtantaneous*, ſo that their properties are no more applicable to each other than thoſe of ſounds to colours, or colours to ſounds; and we can no more form eternity out of time, than by mixing red, blue and green, we can compoſe an anthem, or an opera"! --- *Riſum teneatis amici?*

* See above, page 39.

In truth, common ſenſe, like an awkard booby, is afraid of intruding on ſuch company as this --- ſo fine, ſo learned, and ſuch *entire ſtrangers!* --- however to be ſerious, Your ſuppoſition that the attributes of time and eternity are not applicable to each other, has been, I hope, ſufficiently refuted above.* Time indeed is finite, and eternity infinite, from the very nature of each; in other reſpects we have no reaſon to doubt but that they may be analogous, as far as we can be able to judge of what you yourſelf confeſs to be incomprehenſible.

Seventhly. Your ſeventh and laſt diviſion branches out into ſeveral others; for by this hypotheſis that time and eternity are not analogous,

* Page 65.

many

many metaphyſical and theological cobwebs you ſay may be bruſhed off, and impertinent enquiries cut ſhort, ſuch as about "God's foreknowledge and predeſtination --- the præexiſtent and future ſtate of ſouls --- the injuſtice of eternal puniſhments --- and the ſleep of the ſoul."

Firſt, Sir, you fall upon the creation, (which you forgot I believe to put into the above catalogue) and to the abſurd and preſumptuous queſtion, Why did not God create the world ſooner? you anſwer on your own principles, That "he neither created it ſoon nor late, becauſe there is no time." Now you will pardon me, Sir, if I think that the exiſtence of time, if not of progreſſive thoughts and actions even in the

the Deity, is proved by the creation itſelf, for *in ſix days the Lord made heaven and earth, &c.* And here you have yourſelf hung up ſome metaphyſical cobwebs, which, by the help of what we have already ſaid, may be eaſily bruſhed off.

Having thus *undone creation at a jerk*, you come to foreknowledge and predeſtination, which you ſet aſide becauſe they imply ſucceſſion, which has no relation to the eſſence or perception of God. Now if the foreknowledge of God be every where declared in ſcripture, this may ſerve to ſhew that his perception has ſomething like progreſſion. The foreknowledge of God is indiſputable, and when we conſider that *his ways are not as our ways, nor*

nor his thoughts as our thoughts, † we may ſurely conceive a predeſtination which may be conſiſtent with free-will.

Here I could not but wonder to ſee you ſyſtematically ſacrificing not only a future ſtate, but your own favorite idea of præexiſtence too! You talk of a mode of eternal exiſtence, in which, perhaps, the ſoul may not even know what time means, but how the ſoul could have contracted all thoſe offences in a præexiſtent ſtate, which you ſuppoſe it to have done in your third Diſquiſition, without any time to contract them in, is, I own, beyond my comprehenſion.

The next article ought ſurely to have been with-held, in which, un-

† Iſaiah lv. 8.

der the notion of defending the juſtice (or rather the mercy) of God, you give a looſe to your ſtrictures on the tremendous ſanction of religion, and talk about eternal puniſhments being neither long nor ſhort, becauſe inflicted in a ſtate to which you have not been pleaſed to allow duration. This, Sir, is a ſubject much too aweful to be lightly philoſophized upon, and an idea, alas! far from being removable by ſuch reaſoning as yours.

With reſpect to the ſleep of the ſoul you have brought up no new argument, but have only been at the trouble of putting the old one on a wrong footing. If the ſoul does not perceive the diſtance be-

tween

tween it's departure and the general judgment, this is not becauſe time is nothing, either here or hereafter, but, becauſe like a man in a profound ſleep, the ſoul *may* be in ſuch a ſtate as to be unconſcious of the lapſe of time.

Nothing more, I hope, need be ſaid in confutation of ſo ſtrange a poſition as the above. Inſtead therefore of entangling ourſelves in ſuch metaphyſical cobwebs, how much better would it be to conſider and enforce the uſe and importance of time. *Soles pereunt & imputantur* * ſays the poet; and ſtill more admirably pointed and expreſſive is that of the divine poet, *So teach*

* Martial, Lib. V. Ep. 21.

us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wiſdom. ‡

After all, you profeſs your own doubts as to the credulity of your readers, who from cuſtom and prejudice will be unable to abſtract exiſtence from time --- nay even, you think, though you ſhould ſuggeſt "that various planets are peopled by various beings, and this world itſelf by innumerable genera, *whoſe exiſtence is quite unknown, and incomprehenſible to each other*; ſo that as ſome of theſe inhabit the unfathomable ocean, *time may be no more neceſſary to exiſtence than water.*" Now as to your planetary ſyſtem it is obvious to obſerve, that all we know of ſuch inhabitants is by ana-

‡ Pſalm XC. 12.

logy

logy, which analogy ſtrongly points out to us that they exiſt in time; and as to your mundane argument, ſince I cannot allow that *logic is no more neceſſary to reaſoning than water*, ſo I cannot think we ought to defer all logical concluſions, till every ſhell-fiſh is able to comprehend them. --- In truth your appeal to the animal creation ſeems to be remarkably unfortunate, ſince, if we ſet aſide the calls of nature, there is no one circumſtance of which all animals (I had almoſt ſaid vegetables too) appear to have ſo univerſal a perception as of the exiſtence, and periodical returns of time.

But the chief reaſon why mankind will be ſo unwilling to *come in*

you ſeem to think is ſelf-intereſt: "A merchant ſubſiſting on long credit, a lawyer enriched by delay, a divine who has purchaſed a next preſentation, a general who is in no hurry to fight, or a miniſter whoſe object is the continuance of his power," will not eaſily be convinced that time is nothing. You have here, Sir, given us an odd jumble of people in different, and even oppoſite ſituations; ſome *for* the prolongation of time, and others *againſt* it. The lawyer, general, and miniſter will be againſt your nullum tempus bill, --- the divine, and merchant, (who will certainly wiſh for a quick return) will probably be for it, ſo that you plainly ſee it will *not paſs*. Nor do I think

think you will much encreaſe your party by ſending people " into the ſequeſtered ſhades of ſolitude that they may be able to contemplate ſuch abſtracted ſpeculations," ſince what is falſe in town will be falſe in the country, and the more it is conſidered the more falſe it will appear ; ſo that I cannot perhaps conclude better than by acknowledging, that you have thrown out one idea in which it is probable you will not be deceived, and that is, that to ſome perſons all that you have here ſaid " will appear to be unprofitable illuſions, if not *incomprehenſible nonſenſe*."

LET-

LETTER V.

TO THE SAME.

On his Diſquiſition reſpecting "The Analogy between Things material and intellectual."

SIR,

WHEN I firſt read the title of this Diſquiſition, I expected to have been led by it into the depths of the controverſy on *Materialiſm*, and to have been obliged to labour thro' the ſubtleties of logic to the ſubtleties of matter. I was beginning to collect ideas about the properties or powers of matter, and to conſider, whether if attraction

attraction and repulſion could be looked upon as ſuperadded to it, ſenſation and reflection might not be ſo likewiſe, or, whether the ſoul's operation might not be accounted for on electrical principles. --- Nor was I without apprehenſions that your analogy might break in upon free-will, and end in the neceſſarian ſcheme, by which I apprehend the mind is repreſented as ſubmitting to be acted upon by motives exactly in the ſame manner as the body by mechanical powers, which ſeems to be the propereſt method that could be taken of approximating the ſoul to mere matter. --- However I was glad to find that I ſhould not again be involved in metaphyſics, but that your object

ject was only a compariſon, or parallel between the natural and moral worlds. "There are, you ſay, in the elements of the natural world, and in the paſſions and actions of mankind, powers and propenſities of a ſimilar nature; which operate in a ſimilar manner throughout every part of the material, moral, and political ſyſtems."

You have doubtleſs, Sir, treated the preſent ſubject, as well as all the reſt, with great ſpirit and vivacity, and tho' the *ſtern virtue* of criticiſm might perhaps look upon ſome parts of your analogy as rather fanciful, yet having committed ſome peccadillos of the ſame kind myſelf (to paper I mean, for I have not yet committed them

them to the preſs) I ſhall naturally be more inclined to excuſe, than cenſure them in this reſpect. This Diſquiſition indeed is leſs exceptionable than any of the reſt; ſo that ſince matter has already grown under my hands more than I was aware, and ſince I foreſee that I muſt be more diffuſe on ſome future paſſages than I at firſt intended, I could have been contented to have omitted the preſent article, but that uniformity requires I ſhould give a ſketch of it, and make ſome curſory obſervations.

I know not why you ſhould call this theory abſtruſe and difficult, ſince ſuch an idea of analogy between the natural and moral worlds is not new, and you yourſelf make

it very plain and eaſy by the following conſiderations——That the diſorders both of the natural and moral world are cured, or defeated by their own exceſſes: The ſun by intenſe heat raiſes vapours to mitigate it's own fury, and the villain debilitates his powers by exceſs: (as a properer counterpart you might have ſaid, that a tyranny, like that of James the Second, begets an effectual oppoſition againſt itſelf.) —— That the elements, and the vices of mankind, are each of them reſtrained in their moſt deſtructive effects by their mutual oppoſition: —— That as the middle climates of the natural world are moſt ſalubrious, ſo the middle ranks in the moral are beſt adapted to virtue and

and happineſs; and yet, —— That there are no climates in the one, nor ſtations in the other, which have not peculiar advantages dealt out to them by the impartial hand of Providence. *&c.*

You next enter on a parallel between the material and political worlds, in which you compare attraction to ſelf love, (both attraction and repulſion might have been well exemplified by the Hudibraſtic principles of love and fighting) --- Attraction, you ſay, which breaks a man's neck by tumbling him from a rock, is that alſo which binds together the whole globe, and every individual lump of matter in it, in the ſame manner as ſelf-intereſt, or what we miſtake for it, is the

ſource of all our crimes, and moſt of our ſufferings, and yet is the bond of ſociety and ſpring of all our nobleſt actions.

Here let me obſerve, that when you ſpeak of attraction, as binding all matter, you again tumble yourſelf from the rock of ſpeculation into the immenſe ocean of metaphyſics; for, it ſeems, you are "inclined to think, that without attraction matter itſelf would be annihilated, ſince what is infinitely diviſible would without attraction become infinitely divided, and conſequently annihilated." Here you draw a concluſion from premiſes which are neither practicable nor conceivable, as is plain from the doctrine of Mr. Locke, quoted in

my

my laſt letter. † We might indeed aſk you How that which is by it's own nature infinitely diviſible can ever be infinitely divided? ſince by this it would loſe this eſſential property of *it's* nature, *viz.* infinite diviſibility. I wiſh not however to dwell any longer on the doctrine of infinity, which, as we have ſeen, muſt always be the doctrine of error. By this effects or concluſions of any ſort may be produced; we may divide matter in infinitum, till our reaſonings, like their ſubject, become loſt in their own infinite diſſolution; or, we may compreſs it till, whatever may become of matter, our arguments, at leaſt, may be ſaid to be impenetrable.

† Page 69.

But

But to return to your material and political analogy. The contention of elements you juſtly compare to that of parties. Whig and Tory, Sir, are the elements of the political world, the due and moderate contention of theſe ſhould certainly be kept up, and it is the part of every honeſt man to oppoſe that which ſeems likely to gain an undue aſcendency. --- but more of this in my ſeventh letter.

Here you proceed to contraſt the viciſſitudes of weather with thoſe of peace and war; of which latter you ſeem now to have a more favourable opinion than when you wrote your firſt and third Diſquiſitions, ſince you allow it to be of uſe in the general ſyſtem.

Poverty,

"Poverty, wealth, induſtry, idleneſs, ignorance, ſcience, deſpotiſm, and liberty ſucceed one another," you ſay, "like winter and ſummer:" Theſe are indeed alternately doom'd by their exceſſes to deſtroy themſelves and produce their oppoſites. --- "The flux and reflux of the air, like political controverſy, prevents ſtagnation, and each of theſe when carried to exceſs, gives riſe in the one caſe to ſtorms and inundations, and in the other to anarchy and confuſion," and you might have added, deſpotiſm too. --- Here again you pay a compliment to war, and agree with Lord Bacon, That war is to ſtates as exerciſe to individuals --- wholeſome in moderation, but ruinous in exceſs. Now,

Now, Sir, throughout the whole of theſe paralleliſms you have obligingly furniſhed us with a ſolution of thoſe difficulties which in your third Diſquiſition ſo much diſconcerted you, and made you fly for an explanation of them to an antimundane ſtate of things. --- For a further elucidation of this ſubject I would refer the reader to an excellent ſermon of the late Biſhop of Glouceſter on God's moral government, which I the rather mention becauſe it will point out alſo wherein the two ſyſtems above compared are *not* parallel.

I ſhall juſt obſerve further, That your concluſion of this article is excellent, in which you give a diſplay of the glory of that Almighty Being

Being who hath connected all things moral, as well as natural, by this wonderful chain of reciprocal dependance --- who can ſay, not only to the elements, and the ſeaſons, but to the events of life, and the paſſions of men, " Hitherto ſhall ye go and no further. " Though theſe effects then may be generally overlooked, as proceeding from fix'd cauſes and operations of nature, yet in fact, " nature is nothing more than the art of her omnipotent Author ;" or, as the the great Poet expreſſes it in a work ſomewhat ſimilar to your firſt and preſent Diſquiſitions,

All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
All Chance, Direction, which thou c nſt not ſee. *

* Eſſay on Man, Ep. I.

LETTER VI.

TO THE SAME.

On his Diſquiſition reſpecting "Rational Chriſtianity."

SIR,

QUitting philoſophy and metaphyſics, you now direct our attention in the three remaining Diſquiſitions---Firſt to theology, --- Secondly, to politics, --- And laſtly to both of theſe united.

"Several learned men," you ſay, "to whom revelation has appeared to be contradictory to reaſon and equity, have undertaken the arduous taſk of reconciling them." To attempt

attempt with too much nicety to reconcile the conduct of the Almighty with the rules of human reason, is indeed highly dangerous and presumptuous. As far as this is proper or possible it has surely been so well effected by our divines, that no thinking man, who takes proper pains to inform himself, need fall into the above fatal delusion. We are not however totally to exclude reason (of which we shall presently see the use) from our religious enquiries, tho' in contemplating the great truths of revelation we should certainly "endeavour to exalt the human understanding to the comprehension of the sublime doctrines of the gospel, rather than to reduce those doctrines to the low standard of human reason."

Who the perſons are whom you at preſent attack under the title of *Rationaliſts* you have not declared. They ſeem to be the petitioning clergy, with numbers of the diſſenters, and in general thoſe many new-faſhioned thinkers, who aping the futile philoſophy of the beaux-eſprits of the continent, have fritter'd away revelation into a mere compendium of ethics.

If all theſe be intended, there ſhould certainly have been a diſtinction made, ſince, among the two firſt deſcriptions, there are, I hope and truſt, many ſerious and well-meaning men, who think they are rendering God ſervice, by their attempts to explain revelation into an unneceſſary conſiſtency with reaſon.

Theſe

Theſe then ſhould not have been repreſented as the genuine offſpring of the atheiſts of the laſt century; tho' they ought moſt ſeriouſly to conſider, whether their ſyſtem may not unhappily have been inſtrumental in encouraging that *reaſoning pride*, which has almoſt baniſhed religion from the higher ranks of life. You are very properly ſevere on thoſe who retaining an empty faith, will yet find quibbles from their own reaſon to excuſe their compliance with the commandments of the goſpel, "who are happy to learn how they may be chriſtians, without believing one principle of the inſtitution; and reject the ſubſtance of chriſtianity, tho' they would be ſhocked at relinquiſhing the name."

Theſe

Theſe two ſorts of men we might call ſpeculative and practical Rationaliſts, and qualified by the above diſtinction, your Diſquiſition may be of great uſe, eſpecially in polite circles, who, it is hoped, may be induced to pay attention to what falls from a man of faſhion on ſuch a ſubject as this. I ſhall however make a few ſupplementary obſervations, which, without denying the principle, may correct ſome miſtakes in your manner of treating it.

You revert, in two different places of this Diſquiſition, to the natural original depravity of man, and the redemption which is conſequent upon it, and theſe you now repreſent as *adverſe* to all the principles of human

human reaſon. Had you ſaid *ſuperior* to it, you would have ſaid right; but whether they be adverſe or ſuperior, it muſt either way evince the impropriety of your forcing this ſubject, in your third Diſquiſition, before the tribunal of ſo incompetent a judge.

As to the redemption, of which this depravity is a cauſe, you rightly repreſent it as involving the higheſt myſteries, but theſe you ſhould ſurely have rather placed in the *manner* or *circumſtances*, than in the *grounds* of this diſpenſation. "Reaſon, you ſay, aſſures us that ſufferings can never be compenſations for paſt crimes, much leſs can the ſufferings of one Being atone for the guilt of another." To ſay that ſufferings in a moral ſenſe

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are compenſations for crimes, may be exceptionable, but, in a judicial or religious ſenſe, they may ſurely be looked upon as *atonements to juſtice*; and as to vicarious puniſhments, what elſe were ſacrifices ſo generally allowed of in the heathen world? or how can we ſuppoſe them *adverſe* to human reaſon, ſo long as the ſtories (whether true or falſe) of an Iphigenia, a Codrus, or a Curtius are remembered?

"To prove the *reaſonableneſs* of a revelation" you ſay "is to deſtroy it, becauſe a revelation implies an information of ſomething which reaſon cannot diſcover, and therefore muſt be different from it's deductions, or it would be no revelation." To explain by reaſon what was intended to be revealed above reaſon

reaſon (as ſome things muſt neceſſarily be) is certainly abſurd; but then the *reaſonableneſs* of the *evidence* muſt be proved, otherwiſe the revelation would have no ſolid foundation. With reſpect to the particular circumſtances revealed, ſome of theſe will doubtleſs be ſuch as reaſon could not diſcover, nor fully comprehend, but nothing can be admitted as revelation which is *adverſe* or contrary to reaſon, becauſe this would claſh with thoſe principles on which the revelation is built, and thus the credibility would be deſtroyed. †

† Many things for a time have been thought inconſiſtent with reaſon, which, when properly inveſtigated, have proved to be quite otherwiſe. Galileo was thrown into the Inquiſition for ſaying the earth

Hiſtory is in ſome reſpects an information of what reaſon could not diſcover, ſo that revelation, which is no other than a hiſtory of heavenly things, may well be expected to contain matters far above the comprehenſion of human reaſon, and which, when revealed, it can only contemplate at an aweful diſtance. The Angels, no doubt, underſtand much more of theſe things than ourſelves, and yet we are told That there are circumſtances in the divine œconomy which even they are ſtill anxious to look into. Their inability then, in this reſpect, ſhould

moved, and a Biſhop of Saltzburg was perſecuted for aſſerting that there were Antipodes. — I only wonder they did not hang him up by the heels.

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check the reaſoning pride of man in his preſent ſtate, and their eagerneſs ſhould excite the emulation of every one, and eſpecially of the philoſopher, to attain in a future being that fund ef divine knowledge which is evidently ſo deſirable. Might we not then preſume to conjecture that there may be a ſcale, or gradation of myſteries riſing up to the Trinity itſelf, which, for ought we know, may be as much above any other doctrine in the intellectual univerſe, as the ſmalleſt fix'd ſtar is above the moon in the ſurrounding heavens --- and yet this great doctrine is not mounted ſo high as to be contradictory to reaſon, for we ſay not, as is objected to us, That one is equal to three, but only, That in the eſſence of the

Godhead there is an union, or coexiſtence, of ſo ſublime and myſtical a nature as to be totally imperceivable by the eye of reaſon, and of which the viſual optics of faith can afford a very faint and glimmering diſcernment.

Now as there are myſteries in religion, (and that there ſhould be ſeems ſo conſonant to reaſon, that I am ſurprized any lovers of reaſon could bring themſelves to doubt it) ſo there are, as you obſerve, ſome precepts in the goſpel (and are not theſe parts of revelation?) which are no more a myſtery than the Ethics of Ariſtotle, or the Offices of Cicero. The truth is --- Revelation was intended to teach us our duty towards our neighbour, as well

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as towards God; the precepts reſpecting the firſt of theſe duties are ſuch as regard our conduct in common life, and conſequently muſt be level to our capacities, in order to be of any uſe to us; whereas the ſcriptural information which the Deity has vouchſafed us of his own eſſence is from it's own nature incomprehenſible, and with reſpect to the uſe it is intended for, it is far from being neceſſary that it ſhould be otherwiſe.

Strange as it may ſeem, yet there is much truth in your obſervation, That we are groſsly deceived by reaſon even in political matters, ſince conſtant experience ſhews us, that the fine ſchemes of our ſyſtem-builders, tho' highly plauſible in theory,

theory, are impoſſible in practice Reaſon indeed is equally fallacious in common life: We naturally expect that a man, to whom we have been conſiderable benefactors, will be grateful for it; but it is probable that experience will ſoon convince us, that he is capable of being ſo much the more our enemy on that account: Reaſon therefore, unleſs guided by *experience* will miſlead us even in things which are ſeen; how then ſhall ſhe be able to guide us in reſpect to things which are not ſeen, and of which we have as yet had no experience?

I ſhall make but one more obſervation on this ſubject, and that is That after much ſeverity againſt the Rationaliſt (which indeed is richly deſerved

deſerved by ſuch as aſſuming the name of Chriſtians, yet argue away their obligations to obſerve the moral precepts of their Maſter) you ſeem to ſpeak with an alarming complacency in favour of Deiſm, (on which I ſhall have a future opportunity of animadverting) --- "A religious and moral Deiſt," you ſay, "is a character by no means diſgraceful to a virtuous man:" If you mean in compariſon of a falſe and hypocritical chriſtian, why was you not explicit? if otherwiſe, ſuch a declaration ſurely ill-becomes an oppoſer of Rationaliſm, and a profeſſed champion of the chriſtian faith!

Is it then no diſgraceful character to ſpurn at all the proffered mercies of

of the divine œconomy, and to reſiſt a weight of evidence, which, no one ſurely who had a degree of ſenſe above that of a bel-eſprit, could be able to withſtand? But "ſuch," you ſay, "were Socrates, Plato, and Cicero," --- What --- could they have been ſuch under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation? Surely no. How much better, Sir, would it have been had you repreſented theſe as the ſoundeſt divines in their reſpective ages, and ſuch as would have been among the foremoſt of that venerable claſs in ours. Shall then the ſon of Sophroniſba, who was almoſt a type of the Meſſias himſelf, be transformed into a modern compound of ſcepticiſm and preſumption? The good

Eraſmus,

Eraſmus, Sir, would have given you much juſter ideas of theſe worthies, whom we might entitle, Chriſtians by anticipation; nor ſhould I deem it inconſiſtent with the ſpirit of proteſtantiſm to join in his apoſtrophe, where he ſays, *Vix mihi tempero, quin dicam,---Sancte Socrates ora pro nobis!* *

* Eraſm. Conviv. relig.

LETTER VII.

TO THE SAME.

On his Diſquiſition reſpecting "Government and Civil Liberty."

SIR,

THERE having been an expreſs anſwer publiſhed * to this Diſquiſition, which ſeems to contain the creed of your political opponents, I ſhall endeavour to aſcertain the truth by comparing, and moderating between you. In doing this I muſt perhaps depart ſomewhat from the method I have hitherto obſerved.

* For J. Debrett, Piccadilly. — Since the printing my third Letter I am informed there is an Anſwer to that Diſquiſition, but have not ſeen it.

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I am far from thinking with you that nothing can be added on political ſubjects "which can afford either inſtruction or entertainment" ſince there never was a period, I fear, in which *proper* diſcuſſions of this ſort were more neceſſary. This indeed is dangerous ground --- for politicians are infinitely more a genus irritabile than poets, and he will be little likely to pleaſe either party who is free to blame both, and will go lengths with neither,

While tories call him whig and whigs a tory

You ſay "there have been principles lately diſſeminated with unuſual induſtry which are abſurd, falſe, miſchievous, as inconſiſtent with common ſenſe as with all human

ſociety;" This your anſwerer warmly retorts; and here let me juſt hint, that the word *diſſeminate* ought not, I think, to refer to the writings of ingenious men, but to the induſtrious propagation of principles, by means of emiſſaries, paragraphs, hand-bills, &c.

The principles you oppoſe are the following,

1ſt. That all men are born equal.

2d. That all men are born free.

3d. That all government is derived from the people.

4th. That all government is a compact between the governors and the governed.

5th. That no government ought to laſt any longer than it continues to be of equal advantage to the two contracting parties, that is, to the governed as to the governors.

As to the firſt, --- "Men," you ſay, "are not born equal in point of ſtrength, health, beauty, riches, or fine parts, &c." to which your anſwerer properly enough replies, that this is not what his party means, but a natural equality as to *ſovereignty* (but have not ſtrength, genius, &c. a natural tendency to produce and eſtabliſh ſovereignty?) --- they mean, he ſays, "that ſtate wherein all power and juriſdiction is reciprocal, no one having more than another --- that freedom from ſubordination, which, antecedent to civil compact, belongs to every individual of our ſpecies, who is arrived at years of diſcretion." There may have been many ſtates antecedent to civil compact, but as

to

to there being a ſtate previous to ſubordination I can only ſay, *Gentle ſhepherd tell me where!*

Suppoſing the above to be, as I believe it is, a tolerably juſt epitome of the Lockian ſyſtem, I cannot but ſuſpect that it implies a contradiction in terms, ſince this is to be a ſtate *prior* to ſubordination in general, and yet *poſterior* to that ſubordination which the firſt compact-makers were under during their minority. This would lead us to the patriarchal ſcheme of Sir Robert Filmer, which however is acknowledged by Mr. Locke,* though the ſhocking principles deduced from it had been ſo nobly and effectually refuted by him.

* See Locke on Civ. Gov. § 74, &c. and § 105, &c. The above work has ſo far *got*

This ſtate of nature could only have exiſted amongſt ſavages, and ſo it is underſtood, as appears by Mr. Locke's appeal (whether right or wrong) for the reality of it, to certain tribes of half-brutes † in America. Suppoſing then that there was a ſtate of nature, and

the ſtart of the majeſtic world, as that it was eſteemed a kind of literary treaſon to doubt any thing it contained. But this great man was far from meaning to eſtabliſh an intellectual deſpotiſm, or preclude others for ever from the exerciſe of their *unalienable* right of reaſon. In his preface he invites the candid critic, and profeſſes himſelf open to conviction. Would to God his principles had been thoroughly canvaſſed twenty years ago!

† I ſee no reaſon why theſe degenerated, degraded human beings might not *originally* have had ſubordination.

two or three men-ſavages, diſtinctly created, were accidentally to meet in it, without language, or any ideas about government, might we not conjecture that one of them by his air, preſence, eye, &c. might impreſs the others with an idea of his ſuperiority, ſo that he would naturally lead the way, and the others as naturally follow. This is ſurely poſſible, and Heaven in ſuch a caſe might provide that it ſhould be real. Monteſquieu is of opinion, * that in a ſtate of nature "every man would fancy himſelf *inferior* inſtead of being ſenſible of his equality.

Whatever ſuch original people might do, being ſavages, cannot be any precedent to us; if they form-

* Spirit of Laws, Book I. Chap. 2.

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ed ſocieties, it would be enough to ſet us againſt them; but the truth is, men were *not* originally ſavages;* *ergo cadit queſtio* --- Now had there been ſuch a natural equality, as is here ſuppoſed, and the inferences from it expedient, and conducive to the well-being of ſuch a creature as man, I muſt be permitted to think

* We know but little of the firſt patriarchs, but from what is recorded of them, can any one doubt whether Adam, or Noah had as much good ſenſe or good manners as ourſelves? and to deſcend a little lower, let any man who has a head to underſtand, or a heart to feel, read the 23d and 24th chapters of Geneſis, and then tell me whether the true politeneſs contained in them was ever exceeded in the moſt brilliant court of Chriſtendom. — *Whatſoever is more than theſe cometh of evil* — or, at leaſt, tends to it.

that the great Lord of nature would have given us as clear and explicit an information of it's reality, as he has of the rights of ſovereignty, and the duty of ſovereigns.

II. That all men are born free--- Here, Sir, you are very facetious * about our impriſonment in the womb, our ſwadling-cloths, nurſes, ſchool-maſters, &c.† What is meant

* This your Anſwerer is angry at, becauſe "the ſubject is of great importance" but Mr. Locke himſelf is ſometimes very comical (B. I. § 6.) and ſhould the greateſt genius on earth write a treatiſe founded on a ſtate of nature, which is --- nobody knows what --- he will ſcarcely avoid, now and then, laying himſelf open to the wicked wits. (Compare Civ. Gov. § 27 and 28, with Triſtram Shandy, Vol. III. C. 34.)

† Mr. Locke himſelf ſays, (§ 55) "Children, I confeſs, are not born in this full ſtate

however is a natural right to freedom, derived from a ſtate of equality previous to ſubordination; and this, as your Anſwerer acknowledges, muſt ſtand or fall with the laſt article.

To deny us ſuch natural rights as would be exceſſive and incompatible with our happineſs, is very conſiſtent with the goodneſs of God, but then he has endowed us with ſenſe and ſpirit enough to ſecure to ourſelves as many *civil* rights as are neceſſary and ſafe. In this ſenſe it is that we of this land are indeed *born* ſuperlatively *free*. This is the true ſubſtantial liberty to which we

ſtate of equality, though they are born to it. The bonds of ſubjection to their parents are like the ſwadling cloths, &c."

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are entitled by our birth-right, and for this we are indebted, under Heaven, to that excellent conſtitution, which it is our duty to guard from all encroachments, whether of the monarch, or the people.

"With a great ſum" ſaid the chief captain, "obtained I this [political] freedom," (vaſtly inferior to our own) --- and Paul ſaid "But I was FREE BORN" † Of this ſort of freedom and it's privileges this great apoſtle frequently boaſted; but there is not, I believe, the ſmalleſt hint, either here or elſewhere, in the only book which could have deſcribed our primæval ſtate, of any ſuch natural ante-compact freedom as Mr. Locke ſuppoſes;

† Acts xxii, 28.

whence

whence it ſhould ſeem that there is no genuine liberty above that of a brute,* but what is ſupported by ſome authority; and Mr. Locke owns ‡ that "in *all ſtates* of created beings, *capable of laws*, where there is no law there is no freedom."

That we are naturally ſubjects, without our own explicit conſent, ſeems aſſerted by Mr. Hooker, as quoted by Mr. Locke.† That chil-

* Mr. Locke ſays (§ 63) that "natural freedom is grounded on our having *reaſon*" How then can brutes have it at all? or how can men have it equally when their reaſon is ſo different? The truth ſeems to be, that ſome ſavages bordering on brutes, have a ſort of natural freedom, but reaſonable beings have a ſuitably ſuperior kind of liberty, viz. the *civil*.

‡ -- § 57. † -- § 134.

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dren ſhould be born *outlaws*, (and thereby have no right to protection) in order that they may have a power of conſenting, or not, to be governed when they come of age, ſeems ſtrangely unneceſſary; for in this caſe they muſt explicitly give up ſuch right when of age, ſince no ſtate would ſuffer them to demur. To have univerſal regiſters for this purpoſe would be endleſs, and *evil doers* will never willingly conſent to that which is expreſly inſtituted for their *puniſhment*.*

III. That all government is (originally) derived from the people --- This, like the reſt, is impoſſible to be aſcertained: We know of no original author of ſocieties, but God himſelf;† but what is the doctrine

* I. Pet. ii, 14. † Eccluſ. xvii, 17.

intended to be derived from it? The people, as having *intruſted* the magiſtrate, may reſiſt or depoſe him whenever they *apprehend* he invades their rights: ‡ So then the magiſtrate, who is the intruſted party, muſt never reſiſt the people, if he *apprehends* they have invaded *his* rights. This will hardly be approved of by any one who recollects that the rights on both ſides

‡ Civ. Gov. (§ 240) All this would be proper if it were true, as Mr. L. ſays (§209) that a good king may make himſelf beloved by his ſubjects, as a father by his children." This alas is too often contradicted by hiſtory and experience. A ſeries of proſperity will make people rebel even againſt their God — Were mankind perfect, ſuch ſyſtems would be excellent, but then — what need of any government at all?

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are equally eſſential to the ſalus populi.†

Mr. Locke obſerves (§134) "that the *legiſlative* is ſacred and unalterable in the hands where the community have once placed it;" (this is ſaying a great deal) and Mr. Hooker, as *unfortunately* quoted by him (§ 135), tells us that "laws politic are never framed as they ſhould be, unleſs preſuming the will of man to be inwardly obſtinate, rebellious, and averſe from all obedience to the ſacred laws of his own nature: in a word, unleſs preſuming man to be in regard of

† Surely the hand of providence is diſcernible in our *not* being permitted to know our primæval ſtate, which might afford a pretence for intolerable pride and inſolence, either in the one party or the other.

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his depraved mind, little better than a wild beaſt, &c." If the people be half ſo bad as this, ſuch a body is not very fit to be conſtituted the *King of Kings*.

IV. That all government is a compact between the governors and the governed --- If this be meant *originally* and in a ſtate of nature, enough has been ſaid of it already. Mr. Locke (tho' not very conſiſtently with ſome other parts of his book) ſeems to give up this original compact, where he ſays, (§ 94.) "Perhaps at firſt ſome excellent man might have ſo far got the pre-eminency, that by a kind of *natural authority* the chief rule devolved on him by *tacit* conſent, without any other caution but their aſſurance of

his uprightneſs and wiſdom, *&c.*" Suppoſing then this *excellent man*, like another Orpheus, to have civilized the rude people into regular government, might we not ſay, that government proceeded rather from *him* than *them?*

Mr. Locke however is perfectly right in ſaying That ſuch an arbitrary way would ſoon degenerate, and become intolerable, and hence the neceſſity for thoſe regulations which have from time to time taken place in well ordered ſtates, and to which we owe the *civil* which is the only intelligible, or deſirable liberty --- Call ſuch regulations compacts, and the difficulty vaniſhes.

To this liberty which is ſubſequent (not antecedent) to compact, every reaſon-

reaſonable creature has an undoubted, tho' not an *unalienable*, right. Where this is not claimed it muſt be owing to the weakneſs and degeneracy of the people, † and where it is enjoyed in it's full extent, the great danger is, leſt it ſhould be over-ſtrained, in which caſe there is ſcarce a doubt but that ere long it muſt be forfeited, and --- loſt. Our great political duty then is to defend our own conſtitution,

† There is a difference between the manner in which ſome monarchs have been treated, and the ſtyle of addreſs uſed to the Perſian tyrant, of which ſome excellent examples may be ſeen in the Chevalier Chardin, (chap. 24,) where one of his miniſters thus expreſſes himſelf, "May my ſoul, and that of all his other ſlaves be ſacrificed to the duſt of his bleſſed feet."

which, tho' not perfect in theory, is in fact (if I may be pardoned the equivoque) the moſt admirably *compacted* of any upon the face of the earth.

V. That no government ought to laſt any longer than it continues to be of *equal* advantage to the two contracting parties, that is, to the governed as the governors --- The word *equal* is ambiguous, and you have choſen to take it in it's wrong ſenſe, as if it meant, That every one was to have an equal ſhare of wealth, power, *&c.* If we ſubſtitute the word *reſpective* or *proportionable* inſtead of *equal*, then as referring to caſes of extreme neceſſity, the propoſition I fear is undeniable.

Nothing

Nothing certainly but ſyſtem or party could have made a man of Mr. Locke's philanthropy argue with ſuch coolneſs, and unconcern, about the moſt horrific condition of human nature --- a civil war. This he conſtantly calls an *appeal to heaven*, tho' in general he might have called it much more truly and emphatically an *appeal to hell*. The times indeed in which he lived may be an apology for this, but might not theſe very times have furniſhed him with a different ſyſtem? Might they not have ſuggeſted, that, where the people are not the agreſſors, but are really and ſenſibly aggrieved, they will generally have temper and firmneſs enough to procure the moſt

effectual

effectual redreſs without the neceſſity of blood-ſhed? *

The above ſketch (which is all I could effect at preſent --- and for which I have made room by withdrawing ſome leſs digreſſive matter) needs no apology. I admire the great philoſopher, and as far as his principles are conſiſtent with his motto, the ſalus populi, I am moſt

* The coolneſs with which the revolution was effected is ſomewhat evidenced by the following. On the king's being informed from time to time, of the defection of his lords to the prince of Orange, prince George of Denmark who attended him was uſed to lift up his hands and eyes and exclaim — *Eſt il poſſible?* — At laſt it was told the king that prince George himſelf was gone over; nay then, ſaid he, *it Eſt il poſſible* is gone, it is time for me to go too.

cordially

cordially with him --- The danger is leſt we be miſled by *great names*; and in fact, the errors of the greateſt geniuſes are proportionably greater than thoſe of other men.

To refute an arbitrary ſyſtem, and teach the world that there are caſes in which a tyrant may be oppoſed was a noble deſign, and it has had it's full effect in theſe kingdoms; for who is there in them who believes in the arbitrary ſyſtem of Sir Robert Filmer, or doubts that there are caſes in which a tyrant may be oppoſed?* But if theſe principles are found to be ſuch as

* This kings are not ignorant of. It reflects honor on the preſent king of Denmark, that on being ſhewn the portrait of Oliver Cromwell in Sidney college library, he exclaimed, *Il fait me peur!*

would

would arm what is called the *people* with thoſe very terrors, and that

—— Right divine of doing wrong,

of which kings have been deprived. Such, in ſhort, as would give the multitudes, who are ever deſirous of diſturbing commonwealths, a *natural unalienable* right to do ſo, they are ſuch as I muſt think Mr. Locke, if alive at preſent, would himſelf reject * --- Whether theſe or ſimilar principles are reſerved by Heaven, as inſtruments of vengeance on a rebellious people, Heaven only knows!

* Could this great and amiable man have lived to ſee the ill effects of his ſyſtem, as he did the good ones, he would have wept like Johnny Gay, at the unforeſeen conſequences of his own ſuperior genius.

I ſhall

I ſhall now make a few remarks (out of the many I originally intended) firſt on your Anſwerer, and then on yourſelf --- He complains that "the door of St. James's is ſhut in the face of the Whigs," and yet "he hopes, and is perſuaded, that the wiſdom of the Houſe of Hanover will keep at an aweful diſtance from the throne men profeſſing principles which levelled with the duſt the Houſe of Stewart." This is a wiſh to ſhut the door of St. James's in the face of ſomebody.

If we add to this men profeſſing principles, which, under Cromwell, levelled with the duſt the rights of the people, --- there can be no objection. Should Tories degenerate into Jacobites, or Whigs into Re-

 publicans

publicans they can neither of them have any buſineſs there.

It is the glory of the preſent reign that the door of St. James's has been thrown open to honeſt men of either party. In fact, there ought to be ſome of both near the throne; the one party to prevent the ſovereign from yielding up, thro' deception or timidity, his own eſſential rights; and the other to prevent his being tempted thro' ambition to invade thoſe of his people.

In every mixt government, like ours, there muſt be two ſuch parties as we are ſpeaking of; and a wiſe monarch, who knows that his own rights and thoſe of his people mutually ſupport each other, will

naturally

naturally be a compound of both. * It is a miſtake to ſay that the Houſe of Hanover was eſtabliſhed on Whig-principles---It was eſtabliſhed on *general conſtitutional* principles, which are a mixture of Whig and Tory, and which have the eſſence of both, excluſive of Jacobitiſm on the one ſide, and Republicaniſm on the other. The Whigs indeed brought about the Revolution, but the Tories modified it; and ſince that, the Whigs have kept out a

* His preſent majeſty is as much a whig in every good ſenſe of the word as any man in his dominions, of which the conceſſions under the nullum tempus, and Grenville acts, &c. and eſpecially the renunciation of the power of the crown over the judges are inconteſtible proofs.

Popiſh Tyrant, and the Tories have kept out a ſtill more tyrannical Republic, or Ariſtocracy.

A due contention, and equipoiſe of the above parties, which are eſſential to the conſtitution, muſt be kept up in the nation at large, but eſpecially in the Houſe of Commons, or we are utterly undone. It is a grand and capital error to ſuppoſe that the Commons, becauſe appointed by the people, are the guardians of their rights only, and not equally ſo of the rights of the crown. They are choſen by both parties, and ought to partake of the ſpirit of both.

A ſenſe of the dangerous violence too natural to contending parties will induce moderate men to form

form an independent corps of obſervation, ſo that tho' intereſt or prejudice will bias many, yet ſuppoſing one third of the Houſe of Commons to be influenced by government (no matter how), and another third by oppoſition, will not this throw the balance where it ought to be, that is, into the hands of the independent party? This parliamentary conſtitution we now poſſeſs, and may preſerve, if we will avoid innovations. Our political ſafety then does not depend upon whether a few decayed burroughs *

* Permit me to ſay a word or two on the faſhionable outcry of the preſent year. Small burroughs may be favourable, nay poſſibly neceſſary, to the maintaining of the above *balance* — if ſo, to deſtroy them would

continue to ſend members, but whether we can keep up this due *equilibrium* in the ſenate. Let me here repeat † That " every honeſt man

would be to deſtroy ourſelves. At leaſt, they may, under proper regulations, be ſerviceable, by admitting men of genius and abilities, who may not have ſufficient county or city intereſt. The members returned by the lords of Newton or Old Sarum, repreſent me, and every individual in the empire, as truly (and why not as honeſtly and as ably?) as thoſe choſen in London or in Yorkſhire. But no man it ſeems is *free*, that has not a vote — this is ſo far from true, that many avoid being electors that they may preſerve their freedom. — Hence then we are told every *individual* ſhould have a vote — even the poor intellects of thoſe whoſe heads are meant to be ſet a madding by this device, may ſurely be capable of diſcovering it's abſurdity.

† See above p. 102.

ſhould

ſhould oppoſe whatever party ſeems likely to gain an undue aſcendency." The ſteerſman, and rowers will be unable to ſave the political veſſel if the paſſengers refuſe to *trim.* †

But there is ſtill, Sir, an heavier accuſation againſt you, for by ſaying That "nothing ſo compleatly diſqualifies a man for the community of the bleſſed as a fac-

† This digreſſion will, I hope, be excuſed when it is conſidered that we are threatened with ſome of the moſt ruinous, as well as the moſt plauſible innovations that ever the heart of man conceived. Could I preſume that theſe, and other ſuch reflections, ſyſtematically eſtabliſhed, could conduce to the preſervation of my country, they ſhould be heartily at it's ſervice. For my own part I am by no means a *Michael Caſſio* a good arithmetician, ſo that I ſhould never think of computing politics by the new-faſhioned algebraical method.

tious and turbulent diſpoſition " you have ſhut, it ſeems, " the gates of heaven alſo againſt the Whigs, the Revolutioniſts, and even againſt St. Paul and the Apoſtles, becauſe they turned the world upſide down." Are then the Whigs factious and turbulent? Were our glorious deliverers under King William factious and turbulent? I will undertake to prove that they were the very reverſe. But as to St. Paul and the Apoſtles, it is ſurely amazing that any one could be ignorant that what is here ſaid of them was the malicious ſlander of their enemies, frequently diſclaimed, and as frequently diſproved.

As to thoſe diſturbers of common wealths, who would deſtroy the equipoiſe of ſtates, and who ſow the

the ſeeds of diſcontent, that they may themſelves reap the harveſt of confuſion, --- how their lot will be caſt in a future being is what it more behoves them to conſider than us to ſay. * Sir Robert Filmer admits, That a Tyrant cannot be

* " This I am ſure, whoever, either ruler or ſubject, by force (fraud, declamation, &c.) goes about to invade the rights of either prince or people, and lays the foundation for *overturning* the conſtitution and frame of *any juſt government*, is highly guilty of the greateſt crime, I think, a man is capable of, being to anſwer for all thoſe miſchiefs of blood, rapin, and deſolation, which the breaking to pieces of governments brings on a country. And he who does it, is juſtly to be eſteemed the common enemy and peſt of mankind, and is to be treated accordingly." Mr. Locke, § 230.

ſaved in a future ſtate: Shall we then become more abject flatterers of the people, and their demagogues, than he dared to be even of kings? —— O fye, fye, —— No!

After ſo long a neglect, Sir, I fear I ſhall be able to pay *you* but little attention under the preſent article. The extremes of *your* party are as reprehenſible as thoſe of the other, tho' in the preſent juncture not quite ſo alarming. In a Diſquiſition, otherwiſe juſt and beautiful, you have yourſelf deviated into party,* tho' not ſo much as your

* I ſhall have occaſion in my next to addreſs you on the liberty of the ſubject, which may be an apology for my ſaying ſo little about it here.

Anſwerer; and of this it now becomes proper that I ſhould produce an inſtance or two. To ſay that governments in general are the offſpring of force or fraud is what I can by no means allow; they owe their origin, under Providence, to the nature of man and a ſort of inſtinctive exertion of human prudence for the regulation of this neceſſary condition. *It is not good for man to be alone*, and if not alone, it is unnatural for him to be without ſubordination. ‡ Many revolutions

‡ Whenever the loweſt of the people, have been enabled, for their ſins, not to correct, but to overturn a government, they have almoſt always erected a greater tyranny in it's ſtead. Such a *poſture* of affairs is to the body politic, as ſtanding on the head is to the body natural; one part or other muſt ſtill be uppermoſt.

and preſent eſtabliſhments have been owing to force or fraud, but theſe are not the origin of governments.

Becauſe we know of no *original* rights which men had to give up, you argue, that " Compacts are repugnant to the nature of government, whoſe eſſence † is compulſion." This is far from being true, for no ſooner were there in the world the firſt rudiments of government; but there were the rudiments of civil liberty alſo: theſe are twin-brothers, and if one in ſome countries oppreſſes the other it is unnatural and baſe.

† It is eſſential to government to diſpenſe honours and rewards, as well as puniſhments; and, like the fairy, it muſt not always be ſuppoſed to pinch and bite, but ſometimes to drop a teſter in the ſhoe.

To

To ſay that the eſſence of government is compulſion, is an alarming ſentence. This would be diſtributing the world into conquered provinces, which is an idea at which every generous mind, eſpecially that of an Engliſhman, † revolts with horror. The truth is, that every government is by the very nature of things armed with a kind of internal compulſion to ſupport it's own authority, and reſtrain offend-

† Biſhop Burnet in a paſtoral letter A. D. 1589, having ſlightly mentioned the right of conqueſt amongſt other rights of his patron, both houſes took the alarm, and voted it to be burnt by the common hangman. Some influence however ſeems to have been gained to the votes in the lower houſe, by a pun on the author's name, the younger members calling out, "Oh! *burn it, burn it*, to be ſure."

ers

ers, according to written laws; but then it does not ſupport itſelf by force in deſpite of the good and orderly part of the community, for whenever *they* are ſet againſt it there is a certainty that it has perverted the ends of it's inſtitution.

You ſay "Every governor is in the ſituation of a goaler, whoſe very office ariſes from the criminality of thoſe over whom he preſides; theſe ſometimes ſuffer much from the abuſe of his power, but they would ſuffer more from their mutual ill-uſage if unreſtrained." Here your ſatire is too general to be juſt: the magiſtrate is appointed not to reſtrain *all*, but to defend the good and virtuous from thoſe who are void of principle.

In

In concluſion let me particularly remark, That it is not from the "ſuperior wiſdom of our neighbours," but from the extreme encreaſing wickedneſs of this nation, that we are to apprehend the moſt fatal conſequences. If we look to the firſt cauſe of the fall of empires, it will not be found to be the power of external nor the artifice of internal enemies, but the wrath of an offended Deity † at the national defection from that King whoſe title is *ſupreme* and everlaſting: What the preſent proſpect is I am ſhocked to think, and unable

† On this momentous ſubject let me earneſtly recommend the peruſal of an excellent ſermon preached by Dr. Horne at an aſſizes at Oxford in 1775, and entitled "The providence of God manifeſted in the riſe and fall of empires."

to deſcribe. Nothing I fear but a national reformation can preſerve us long! Our aſtoniſhing diſſoluteneſs of morals and neglect of ſacred things; our extreme hatred and animoſities, our intolerable commercial impoſitions, and very great private (tho' not public) tyrannies and oppreſſions, *&c. &c.* theſe are the *Helen* thro' whoſe detention our political Troy will be in danger of burning; ſo that I fear we may too well apply to our own ſituation the warning of the Propheteſs,

"Cry, Trojans, cry! a Helen and a woe:
"Cry, cry! Troy burns, or elſe let Helen go." *

* Troilus and Creſſida, Act II. Sc. 2.

LETTER VIII.

TO THE SAME,

On his Diſquiſition reſpecting "Religious Eſtabliſhments."

SIR,

AS we have now travelled together through ſuch a variety of real and unreal tracks, not perhaps without ſome degree of mutual ſatisfaction, may I not indulge a hope, that having ſhewn myſelf by no means diſinclined to praiſe, I ſhall experience a more favorable attention, ſhould I be under the leſs pleaſing neceſſity of finding fault.

" Government, " as you well obſerve on the preſent ſubject, " has nothing to do with men's religion, if men's religion had nothing to do with government." How cruelly then were the firſt Chriſtians treated by the Roman Emperors in return for their unſhaken loyalty? But Chriſtianity, we are told † was intolerant of the eſtabliſhed religion. It was no more ſo than from the nature of things it was under a neceſſity of being --- as well might the ſun be blamed for being intolerant of darkneſs. ‡ Had the firſt Chriſtians commenced Iconoclaſts --- had the heathen temples been invaded by them, as ſome chapels

† Gibbon's Hiſt. of the Decline, &c. Ch. 14.

‡ II. Cor. vi. 14, &c.

have

and meetings have been in modern days, the legiſlature would have been juſtifiable in the uſe of wholeſome ſeverity, but this was far from being the caſe; they only beſought men to turn from ſuch vanities; their conduct was truly peaceable, charitable, and diſintereſted; they had no more a wiſh to injure the craft of Demetrius than the authority of Cæſar.

This may ſerve to ſhew us what is, and ever muſt be, the genuine ſpirit of Chriſtianity; and what you next obſerve, viz. that "men do not quarrel with each other for their belief in ſpeculative doctrines, but becauſe ſuch doctrines are ſignals of ſome party, adverſe to their intereſts or ambition" may

ſufficiently exculpate religion from being the real cauſe of thoſe wars and maſſacres which have been laid to her charge by the philoſopher of Ferney.

Chriſtianity, compleat and excellent as it is, does not however ſeem intended to appear to every one ſimply and uniformly the ſame; all men think the rainbow beautiful, tho' no two ſee it in the ſame point of view. The mind of man is infinitely various, and always more or leſs corrupt; and religion from it's own nature muſt be in ſome parts awfully obſcure: Hence then thoſe diviſions among chriſtians which were neither unintended, nor unforetold, "*There muſt be alſo hereſies amongſt you, that they which are approved*

proved may be made manifeſt amongſt you." *

It is but too true, I fear, that ſuch ſects in the preſent ſtate of things, could not long ſubſiſt peaceably together, did not government eſpouſe and eſtabliſh ſome one amongſt them in preference to the reſt: much leſs I apprehend would it be poſſible, according to the idea of Chillingworth, to eſtabliſh the bible at large as the religion of proteſtants, which would in fact be making as many ſects as individuals. That a national church then muſt be eſtabliſhed, with teſts and ſubſcriptions, ſeems unavoidable; and the duty of conformity obviouſly ariſes from the benefits of union,

* 1 Cor. xi, 19.

and

and the rights of a majority to bind a minority; but we muſt beware, leſt we puſh this duty too far, by which it would end in a reflection on the reformation itſelf. The duty of conformity is certainly great, but the duty of toleration is ſtill greater: when ſects which are tolerated continue ſtrugling for power, they diſcover that they are not truly chriſtian, but an eſtabliſhment which adopts perſecution becomes compleatly heatheniſt.

I hope and truſt that what you ſay of ſects and diſſenters is too harſh and ſevere, ſince, in general you repreſent them as reſtleſs and implacable enemies to government, and as "obſerving a conſtant *routine* of imploring toleration, claiming equality

lity, and ſtrugling for ſuperiority" though, if they would confine themſelves to ſpeculation only, you allow that they might be "pious and honeſt men, laudably tenacious of opinions, to which they are anſwerable to God alone." But why muſt diſſenters be always enemies to government? becauſe, you ſay, "it patronizes a profeſſion which they *muſt* look upon as falſe and *impious.*" To this, I doubt not, theſe gentlemen will thank me for giving a decided negative. *Impious*, Sir, is a word which we do not now apply even to Popery itſelf, and notwithſtanding the black catalogue of former ſuperſtitions, yet no intelligent proteſtant, I hope at preſent, looks on different ſects in any other light

light than as being comparatively ineligible.

From what remains of this Diſquiſition we might be tempted to ſuſpect, that you ſet up your eſtabliſhment for no other purpoſe but to ſhew your ingenuity in pulling it to pieces --- "Extend," you ſay, the comprehenſion ever ſo widely, it will exclude many pious and worthy perſons, who are tenacious of different principles, and narrow it to any degree, it will ſtill admit all thoſe who have none." You are however, for admitting ſuch as have no principle, on account of the aſſiſtance they may render to the ſtate; ſince, though they are not ſo good men, they may be better ſubjects." Whether you refer to the unprincipled

cipled clergy, or laity, or both, I know not; but ſuch expreſſions I muſt ſincerely regret as of the moſt dangerous tendency. It is true you only ſay that bad men *may* be good ſubjects, which, as providence delights to bring good out of evil, may ſometimes be the caſe; but no wiſe and good government will place any great dependance upon ſuch, ſince, by your own confeſſion, their ſupport ariſes entirely from intereſted, and not from public ſpirited motives; whereas it might eaſily be proved that no one is truly a good ſubject, who is not ſo for conſcience ſake.

This age has already produced a theoretic monſter in the poſition, that a king may be a good king,

though a bad man, and devoid of religious principles. Suppoſe then we were to accommodate ſuch a *good* irreligious, unprincipled king, with a ſet of your equally *good* irreligious, unprincipled ſubjects, ſince, by ſuppoſition, there would be no real faith, honor, honeſty, or public ſpirit on either ſide, this would doubtleſs give riſe to a moſt enchanting Δυς-*topia*, which I muſt leave thoſe who have more leiſure and fancy than myſelf to depict in proper colors.

The imperfections and corruptions of all eſtabliſhed religions are obvious and undeniable; but then it is highly neceſſary to make a diſtinction between human eſtabliſhments and Chriſtianity itſelf. Eſtabliſh

bliſhments, being both fabricated, and carried on by men, muſt neceſſarily be imperfect in their conſtitution, and corrupt in their adminiſtration, but Chriſtianity, which is framed and adminiſtered by God himſelf, muſt be a *perfect and undefiled law.*

Thus far, Sir, we are nearly agreed, but the diſtinction which you preſently make, with reſpect to liberty, (to which ineſtimable bleſſing I am as truly and zealouſly attached as Mr. Locke himſelf, though I cannot altogether agree with him as to it's origin and extent); this diſtinction, I ſay, muſt not be ſo lightly and eaſily paſſed over. " Mankind," it ſeems, " are always to be conſidered in a two-

fold capacity, as individuals, and as members of ſociety." As individuals of a general ſpecies you allow us the greateſt liberty imaginable, for as ſuch we are free, equal and independent; but you give the magiſtrate an unlimited controul over us, as members of ſociety, for in this capacity, obedience to our ſuperiors is an *indiſpenſible* duty. Now the difficulty here whether intended or accidental, conſiſts in the ambiguity of the word *individual*. If you mean unconnected individuals in a fanciful ſtate of nature, your poſition may be true in theory, but impoſſible in practice, ſince we never can *be*, and conſequently never can *act*, in ſuch a ſtate; but if you refer to a man as an individual in

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ſocial common life, with reſpect to his neighbours, in contradiſtinction to a member of ſociety, with reſpect to the magiſtrate, your poſition is not true, for there he is no leſs ſeriouſly bound by his duty to his neighbour, than by his duty to his king. The ſame reaſoning you apply to religious liberty, in order to ſhew that in their public characters men *muſt* conform whether their conſciences will let them or not. What then is the ſum of this liberty which you have been pleaſed to allow us? It amounts to the moſt abſolute freedom with reſpect to a ſtate which we never can be in, and an abſolute ſlavery with reſpect to that in which we are.

The extremes of liberty or ſlavery were not made for man; the perfection

fection of earthly ſtates is legal government, where he is free to do good but not to do evil. Your alarming, and truly cenſurable poſition, that we are not free as members of ſociety, is, as I hope I have already proved, † the very reverſe of the truth. The only true and ſubſtantial liberty is what we enjoy by being citizens, ſince this renders us capable of rights and privileges, with which a ſtate of nature is unacquainted even in idea.

We now ſeem to be arrived at the *denoûment* or unravelling of the plot, in which the artful management of a fable chiefly conſiſts. But ſurely we have here the princi-

† Page 131, &c.

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pal character ſhifted upon us, ſince, inſtead of an eſtabliſhment, Chriſtianity itſelf is now brought upon the ſtage in propriâ perſonâ --- But to drop my metaphor, though you profeſſed this to be a Diſquiſition on "religious eſtabliſhments" yet from hence to the end of it you have choſen openly to attack Chriſtianity, as incompatible with the occupations of mankind, and totally unfit for general uſe.

"It is remarkable" you ſay "that Chriſtianity *conſtantly* addreſſes us as men, *never* as citizens; the *only* duty it requires of us under that character is ſubmiſſion to power in general, but it) preſcribes *no* rules for our political conduct." This ſentence is both obſcure and contra-

tradictory. You ſeem to mean that Chriſtianity gives us particular rules for our private, but only general ones for our public conduct. I ſhall conſider both theſe ideas in their turns, and firſt for the political.

If religion enjoins one political duty, viz. that of ſubmiſſion, how can it be ſaid *never* to addreſs us as citizens? To expect that particular directions ſhould be found in it, which might apply to the Engliſh, French, or German conſtitutions, would ſurely be entertaining a very mean, and contracted idea of a catholic ſyſtem. It's canon however includes a Levitical law, which is particular enough, and which bids much fairer than

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any ſtate-of-nature-compacts, to be looked upon as the general ſource of human juriſprudence.

There cannot be a ſtronger mark of the divine energy, than for a law to be univerſal without being particular; and this is ſo much the caſe with regard to the well-known injunctions of Chriſtianity on this head, that I own I am unable to conceive a ſtandard of political duty more perfect, and univerſally applicable.

By ſaying Chriſtianity *never* addreſſes us as citizens, you have perhaps unknowingly, paid it a great compliment. Had the goſpel been a forgery, and it's firſt preachers intended to ſet up, or favour ſome particular government, it is utterly

inconceivable that it could have been ſo ſparing in it's political directions. Other religions have been plainly adapted to the ſetting up of caliphs, popes, or lamas; and Paganiſm, which began with idolizing dead kings, at laſt blaſphemouſly proceeded to pay divine honors to the living.

But the chief difficulty conſiſts in your aſſertion, (though in the teeth of the thirty ſeventh article) that Chriſtianity is abſolutely incompatible with the carrying on of war.* This war, alas! is one of the four ſore judgments in the hand of God,† and we can no more expect that

* This queſtion is learnedly and elaborately diſcuſſed by Grotius de jure belli et pacis. B. I. C. 2.

† Ezekiel, xiv. 21.

Chriſti-

Chriſtianity ſhould forbid it, than that it ſhould forbid the peſtilence. Unjuſt hoſtilities indeed are cenſured, but wars in general, and eſpecially the defenſive, are winked at for the preſent, and their total ceſſation will be one diſtinguiſhing feature of the Meſſiah's kingdom.* When our Saviour ſaw Herod marching out againſt a neighbouring prince, he contented himſelf with merely raiſing a parable upon this circumſtance; § and when St. Paul wrought in his calling as a tent-maker, could he be certain that his work would never be made uſe

* James iv. 1.

§ Luke xiv, 31.

of but in the peregrinations of peaceful clans ? *

We now come to our duty as private individuals, under which character you ſay Chriſtianity *conſtantly* addreſſes us. "Any one" you ſay, "as an invidual, may pay obedience to it: to thoſe who have little to do with the *buſy occupations* of the world it is an eaſy taſk; for thoſe who are deeply engaged in

* Our religion is ſo far from being adverſe to this profeſſion, that in the armies of the later emperors there were no better ſoldiers than the Chriſtians; and indeed, whenever the ſpirit of it has been infuſed into a ſhip's crew, or a regiment, by conſcientious commanders, they have always been known to fight the better for that very circumſtance.

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the *moſt innocent* * of them it is extremely difficult." Here then we have a religion conſtantly addreſſing us under a character in which we can comply with not one of it's precepts! If you mean individuals, in a ſtate of nature, it is nonſenſe, --- you might as well allude to a ſtate of præexiſtence.

Nothing, Sir, can poſſibly be more dangerous or untrue than to repreſent Chriſtianity as *impracticable*, or having a *ſpirit of inactivity*. This is ſo far from being the caſe,

* How naturally do the extremes of oppoſite principles bring us round to the ſame point of error! You have here been led to a deduction exactly ſimilar to the qualms of Mr. Maw-worm, in the Play, who, I think, is "a-fear'd as how it ſhould be a ſin to keep a ſhop."

that

that it inculcates a ſpirit of induſtry, *be not ſlothful in buſineſs.* It is proverbially true that, honeſty is the beſt policy, ſo that in this reſpect too, Chriſtianity muſt be favourable, or well-adapted to the *buſy occupation* of the world. You talk of the *moſt innocent* occupations, but are not all lawful callings innocent, if conſcientiouſly purſued? The truth is, I fear, men will *not* act conſcientiouſly, ſo that they firſt reject the laws of God and then find fault with them, by way of juſtification: ſurely *you* Sir, would not wiſh to encourage ſuch a conduct as this.

But it may be ſaid that Chriſtianity requires perfection --- by no means. The rule itſelf as coming from God, and as intended for a ſtan-

ſtandard of duty, is neceſſarily perfect, but it is the good meaning of the heart, and not an unerring compliance that is expected of us. If, on the other hand, our ways are become ſo corrupt, that they are *totally inconſiſtent with Chriſtianity*, what have we to expect? But then the fault is not in the ſyſtem, but in the paſſions and vices of men.

Are there then, Sir, no ſort of men whatſoever, who are capable of being Chriſtians, without incurring too much inconveniency? yes, monks, you will allow, may enjoy this enviable privilege. "It was to this opinion," you think, "of the incompatibility of Chriſtianity, with the buſineſs of the world, that monaſteries owed their origin;" though,

in

in that caſe, one ſhould ſuppoſe the buſy would have flocked into them rather than the idle. Theſe, however, which you at firſt deſcribe as a ſort of heavenly aſylums for devotion and religious contemplation, immediately afterwards become "nothing better than retreats for lazineſs, and ſeminaries of ſuperſtition and vice.

Quo teneam vultum mutantem Protea nodo?

And yet all this ſtory ſeems to amount to no more than, that were good men to go into monaſteries, they would be good ſort of places, and vice verſâ.

I muſt own, Sir, that I was amazed at finding a perſon of your penetration repreſenting theſe ſcenes of religious mummery as "favourable to the genuine ſpirit of our reli-

religion," and "conducive to the practice of *every* Chriſtian virtue;" Chriſtian virtues! --- what then do you ſuppoſe them to be? Contemplation and prayer, I own, are of the number, but theſe are ſo naturally obvious, that they are practiſed under all religions. All this, Sir, is owing to your not perceiving that Chriſtianity is an *active*, and a *ſocial* ſyſtem --- that it is chiefly converſant in the buſy, the intereſting, and affecting ſcenes of life --- that it is the religion, not of monſters, but of men, --- not of the monk, (for he has ſo little to do with any body, that the religion of Congo might ſerve for him) but of the monarch, the ſubject, the ſtateſman, the merchant, the rich man,

the poor man, in ſhort, of every poſſible ſituation in life, whoſe reſpective duties it's ſpiritual influence is adapted to pervade, even to the dividing in ſunder the hearts and reins. --- What? "charity carried to a higher degree in a cloiſter than in an other ſituation"! in a place where there are neither paſſions, nor temptations to be withſtood, nor diſtreſſes to be relieved, Chriſtianity then would there be the moſt excellent where there are no objects nor occaſions to call it forth. If ſolitude and meditation be the eſſence of religion, why not inſtance in the hermit? and on this ground you may ſhew with great effect, in ſome future Diſquiſition, that Elijah, while on mount Carmel, was much better em-

employed than all the reſt of the Prophets and Apoſtles put together.

Having thus, Sir, after rendering Chriſtianity a dead letter, provided for it's decent interment in a cloiſter, and appointed your monks to ſing a requiem to it's ſoul, you pronounce it's funeral oration, which is by no means in a ſtyle of panegyric.

" It is ſo *adverſe* to the nature of man" --- How unfortunate is this? what was before adverſe to our reaſon † is now become ſo to our nature too. Is it credible then that the ſame Almighty Being which formed both the nature of man, and the ſyſtem which was to correct and me-

† See page 110.

liorate it, ſhould have made them adverſe to each other? No man can diſtinguiſh with a more critical acumen than yourſelf whenever you think proper, how ſtrange then that you ſhould have here jumbled and confounded together vice in the abſtract with the human heart, or the corruptions of our nature with the nature itſelf; as well might you have taken the diſeaſe and the conſtitution for one and the ſame thing. Phyſic is adverſe indeed to the malady, but by no means ſo to the conſtitution.

But " Chriſtianity is ſo improper for the purpoſe of it's eſtabliſhment" --- On this head enough has been ſaid already. I ſhall only obſerve that you are here graciouſly pleaſed

to

to acknowledge that it is leſs improper than any other religion; and that as ſome one or other *muſt* be eſtabliſhed as a ſtate-engine, one may as well have a true as a falſe one: "nor will any one," you think, "ſuppoſe it preferable to eſtabliſh Paganiſm, or Mahometaniſm, and *lay Chriſtianity by for private uſe.*" !

"Mere Deiſm," as you ſeem to regret, "never can be eſtabliſhed" what a pity! But pray, Sir, what is mere Deiſm, for you are probably better acquainted with it than myſelf? If I might hazard a conjecture I ſhould ſuppoſe it to conſiſt in the getting rid of every kind of religion, except what clings ſo faſt to the nature of man, that it cannot be

be ſhaken off by the moſt determined efforts of our new-fangled philoſophers. This, I ſuſpect, is no inadequate idea of *mere* Deiſm; but permit me to obſerve, that it ſeems evident, that he who *merely* ſays in his heart there is a God, is *merely* not a fool.

Having noticed how *adverſe* and *improper* a ſyſtem Chriſtianity is, you come laſtly to repreſent it as *imperfect*. In your concluding document, as the reſult of all your enquiries, you inſtruct us that, "as members of political communities, we are bound to accept it *with all it's imperfections*, though, as individuals, we ought always to approach as near to it's original purity as our own imperfections will permit."

Here

Here, I am afraid, after blaming the Rationaliſt for degrading religion,† you have yourſelf ſunk it even *below* the ſtandard of human reaſon, ſince your own reaſon has been able to diſcover ſo many imperfections in it.

But how did this original purity become contaminated? By the uſing, you ſay, --- by it's worldly connections --- by it's being eſtabliſhed, and conſequently corrupted. Can then the vices of any nation or individual affect or alter the internal holineſs of the word of God? Will his laws become different by being differently obeyed? No, Sir, as ſoon ſhall the batteries of infidelity be enabled to diſmount the ſmalleſt of it's evidences, as the vices of

† p. 107. mankind

mankind to pollute or contaminate the moſt familiar of it's precepts.

The ſame *illuſion* we ſee ſtill haunts us to the laſt. Had you ſaid that we ought as citizens to accept the hierarchy with all it's imperfections, it would have been ſomething; but here lies the indiſpenſible diſtinction: The nature of man, and conſequently human eſtabliſhments muſt be imperfect; the nature of God, and conſequently Chriſtianity muſt be perfect.

But may not God, it may be ſaid, make a thing imperfect if he pleaſes? In one ſenſe no doubt he may and does; but then we may obſerve that ſuch imperfection is in fact a perfection, becauſe purpoſely ſuited to the nature of the thing; this then

then is an effect, not of weakneſs, but of wiſdom in the Divine Artificer. If Judaiſm was left imperfect, this was openly declared, and was eſſential to it's being introductory to a future and more glorious ſyſtem, whereas it is no inconſiderable argument for the perfection of this latter, that it appeals to nothing beyond itſelf, but to it's own final completion and eſtabliſhment.

Chriſtianity is ſo far from having been ſullied or eclipſed, that it daily acquires new brightneſs, from the expoſitions of the learned, and the fruitleſs attacks of it's enemies; and it may not, perhaps, be deſtined to acquire it's full luſtre, till the ſecond coming of the Meſſiah, un-

der whoſe reign, it is poſſible, it may be *eſtabliſhed*, if I may ſo ſay, in it's perfection, and practiſed in it's purity.

In ſhort, Sir, after what has been argued on this laſt great ſubject of our enquiry, you will not, I hope, want any further inducement to *amend* your own concluſion, and join with me in ſubſtituting in the room of it, that character of the Chriſtian ſyſtem, as drawn by an eminent divine, which is far more juſt, and applicable to the preſent train of reaſoning, namely "that as well in PERFECTION as in PURITY, as well in PUBLIC USE as in PRIVATE, it is truly worthy of the original it aſſumes."

FINIS.